Bihar District Gazetteers

SARAN

By

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सत्यमेव जयते

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PREFACE.

The first District Gazetteer of Saran edited by Mr. L. S. S. O'Malley, I.C.S. was published in 1908. The book was revised by Mr. A. P. Middleton, I.C.S. and reprinted in 1930. In his preface, Mr. Middleton mentioned that the second edition had been prepared on the same lines as the first. It was a book of 186 pages.

Since 1930 there had been very many basic changes in the district and the country. The old District Gazetteers with a limited objective do not satisfy the present requirements. They were more or less meant to be an administrator's hand-book and were written from a particular angle. With independence in the country, the very character of the State Government has changed. Although brilliantly written and replete with facts, the previous series of Gazetteers have to be entirely re-written from a different angle and the phenomenal changes recorded. There is also scope for the reappraisal of many features in the light of data now made available. The State Government in the Revenue Department have undertaken this work of re-writing and publishing the District Gazetteers.

This re-written District Gazetteer of Saran is the fifth publication in the new series. The District Gazetteers for Hazaribagh, Muzaffarpur, Gaya and Singhbhum have already been published. The pattern for the present Gazetteer of Saran is somewhat changed although the main objective is the same as in the four re-written Gazetteers of Bihar published in the last three years. The Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, New Delhi, has now taken up the work of publishing four Central Volumes of Gazetteers for India and in consultation with the State Editors has drawn up a general plan to be followed with necessary variations by the States for their District Gazetteers. The idea is that there should be a uniform series of Gazetteers for all the districts in India with a common purpose and pattern as far as possible. India's scheme has been followed in the re-writing of the District Gazetteer of Saran as far as possible. As a matter of fact, the Saran District Gazetteer would have been published much earlier as a lot of work done had to be re-aligned in order to follow India's pattern drawn up only in 1958.

The task of re-writing the District Gazetteer of Saran has its own difficulties. There have been no Survey and Settlement

Operations recently nor any Economic Survey. The march of events since 1947 has been extremely rapid, changes fundamental and the face of the district is being changed.

In this task the old records, published and unpublished documents in the National Archives, New Delhi, West Bengal Historical Archives and the Record Rooms at Chapra and Muzaffarpur have been utilised. The study of the Old English Correspondence Volumes from 1785 to 1866 in Saran Record Room was taken up a few years before and from these dust-laden and crumbling unindexed volumes, a lot of data had been collected and utilised for publishing "Sarkar Saran" in 1956. "Sarkar Saran" may be treated as a sister volume to this book. A similar book, "Muzaffarpur Old Records", has been published in 1959 on a study of the Old Correspondence Volumes in Muzaffarpur Record Room (1769—1857). The data available by this research also has been utilised in compiling this Gazetteer. For the later events, I have had help from various published books, Government reports, and data supplied by institutions and kind collaborators. My previous official assignments in Tirhut Division were helpful. Extensive tours had to be undertaken.

An attempt has been made to provide an objective book of reference for a wider range of readers including politicians, researchers, writers, journalists, teachers, students, and, by no means, least, the interested man in the street.

A book of this type can only be compiled by the pooling of resources, personal contact, observation and study. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of Indian Republic. Dr. Rajendra Prasad comes from Saran district and the text on History was sent to him. He was gracious enough to spare me time for a detailed discussion and gave me many valuable information regarding the district. His encouraging words were a great inspiration. Shri Binodanand Jha, Revenue Minister, and Shri Radha Govind Prasad, Deputy Minister, have always helped me with their thoughtful suggestions. The authorities of the National Archives, New Delhi, National Library, Calcutta, Historical Archives, West Bengal Government, Calcutta, and Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta have ungrudingly loaned me their rare books and documents.

The entire set of texts of this Gazetteer had been sent to Shri Chandrika Ram, M.A., B.L., Deputy Minister, Agriculture, who comes from Saran district. He went through the texts and offered valuable suggestions. Among other collaborators who

have kindly helped me particular mention has to be made of Shri Adrish Banerji, M.A., Assistant Superintendent of Archæological Department, Government of India, for the text on History, Shri S. A. Shere, Curator, Patna Museum, the Public Relations Department, Bihar, for some of the photos, the District Magistrate of Saran and the Central Gazetteers Unit for many suggestions on the texts.

The Superintendent of the Secretariat Press, Gulzarbagh and his staff have taken personal interest in the printing of the book. I am much indebted to all my helpers and offer my thanks to them.

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The 22nd November, 1959.

P. C. ROY CHAUDHURY.

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DISTRICT GAZETTEER OF SARAN.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL.*

INTRODUCTORY.

The district of Saran, which is the westernmost district of the Tirhut Division, is situated between 25°39′ and 36°39′ north latitude and between 83°54′ and 85°12′ east longitude. It contains an area of 2,678 square miles and a population, according to the census of 1951, of 31,55,144 persons. The principal town and administrative headquarters is Chapra, situated on the north bank of the river Gogra, close to its former junction with the Ganga, in 25°47′ N. and 84°44′ E.

ORIGIN OF THE NAME.

The origin of the name Saran is doubtful. General Cunningham was at one time of opinion that it was derived from the Sanskrit word *Sarana*, meaning an asylum or refuge, and connected it with a legend of Buddha overcoming and converting certain evil demons who lived on human flesh "The demons," he says, "embraced Buddhism, or as it was expressed by the ancient Buddhists, sought the refuge or asylum of the three Precious Ones, i.e., of the Buddhist triad. Buddha, Dharma and Sangha". To commemorate the conversion of the demons of the desert, Asoka erected a *stupa* which General Cunningham concluded must have been called the *Sarana* or Asylum stupa, adding that "It must have been one of considerable celebrity as there can be little doubt that its name was eventually imposed on the district in which it stood". He subsequently, however, changed his opinion regarding the position of this *stupa* and considered that the site must be looked for near Arrah in the Shahabad district.

Another and more plausible derivation which has been suggested is that the name is a corruption of *Sarangaranya* or the deer forest. According to local legend in prehistoric times a holy recluse, named Rishi Sringi, had his hermitage at Singahi, a few miles east of Chapra, in the midst of a dense forest full of deer. A third suggestion which has been put forward is that Saran is a corruption of *Sakra-aranya*, i.e., the forest of Sakra or Indra, which formerly covered the country

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* This text is mostly based on the Chapter "Physical Aspects" in *Saran District Gazetteer* by A. P. Middleton, I.C.S., (1930) with necessary changes and recent statistics. (P.C R.C.)

round Visala, where King Sumati entertained Rama when he was proceeding with Vishwamitra from Ajodhya to Mithila.

BOUNDARIES.

The district is a wedge of alluvial soil thrust in between the Ganga (previously known as Ganges), Gogra and Gandak rivers. The Gandak separates it on the north-east from the district of Champaran and on the south-east from Muzaffarpur; on the south the Ganga forms the boundary, dividing it from the Patna and Shahabad districts, while the western and north-western boundaries march with Uttar Pradesh. The Gogra, running parallel with the Gandak, meets the Ganga a few miles from Chapra and forms the boundary between Saran and the Balia districts on the south-west, while an irregular base-line drawn north-east from Gogra to the Gandak, constitutes the western and north-western boundary between this district and the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. On this side alone can there be said to be a fixed boundary; for along the greater part of the perimeter of the district, the mid-stream of the Gogra, Ganga and Gandak forms a constantly changing boundary, as these great rivers are perpetually oscillating from side to side and necessitating frequent changes in jurisdiction.

Investigations are made by the Collector of Saran and his counterpart of the neighbouring district in Uttar Pradesh after the rivers or any other channels have changed their course in the floods and some mutual adjustments have to be made. Only four tauzis have been transferred from this district to other districts and none from other to Saran during the last 20 years. Their approximate area according to Regulation Settlement Records comes to 1,110.44 acres only.

The history of the district as an administrative unit has been covered separately. Sarkar Saran or the district of Saran originally included the present district of Champaran. In 1866 Champaran was separated as a district. The present district of Saran has three subdivisions, namely, Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj. Details about the subdivisions and the thanas have been given separately.

TOPOGRAPHY.

In shape, the district resembles an isosceles triangle. the sides of which have an aggregate length of nearly 280 miles. The base, which is very irregular and is about 90 miles in length, lies towards the north-west; the sides are formed by the Gandak, 95 miles long, and by the Gogra and the Ganga which also have a combined length of about 95 miles; and the apex is formed by the junction of the Gandak and the Ganga towards Sonepur at the south-east corner. The district forms a wide alluvial plain, bounded by great rivers and intersected by numerous water channels which flow in a south-easterly direction and carry off the drainage of the country. They generally

run along levels higher than the adjacent land, which is therefore liable to inundation whenever they overtop their banks. Beneath these high banks lie the basins in which the surface drainage primarily collects, to be discharged into the rivers in their lower reaches. Such depressions locally known as *chaurs* cover large areas in the south and south-east of the district.

There is a very gradual slope from the north-western corner, where Kuchaikot, the highest point in the district, is 222.51 feet above mean sea-level, to Sonepur in its south-eastern corner at the junction of the Ganga and Gandak, where the height is only 168.32 feet above sea-level, giving a difference of 54.19 feet. The slope is almost imperceptible, averaging only 8 inches a mile, and the district thus presents the appearance of a level plain without hills or natural eminences and with hardly any elevation, except the mounds which mark the sites of old fortresses or of deserted villages. It used to be beautifully wooded with an abundance of mango groves as mentioned in the last District Gazetteer. Decades back the people had a passion for planting them and mango gardens were a valuable property. It is said that the rainfall at Chapra was decreasing owing to the decreasing number of groves with which the town was surrounded. Nowadays, the demand for timber on the one hand and for arable land on the other, and the facilities afforded to the cultivators of disposing of their rights in them have led to a depletion of these orchards. The Sugar and other Mills at times have had to depend on wood fuel. Before the abolition of the zamindary, a large number of such mango groves were cut down and sold.

There is little or no waste land. The district being very much deficit in food crops even marginal lands, *chaurs* and pasturages have not escaped the plough. The district which is densely populated has long been known for the high state of its cultivation. The wide expanses of the low land along the banks of the rivers produce good cold weather crops, but the autumn harvest is rendered precarious by the rivers overflowing their banks during the rainy months, when the maize crop is approaching maturity. One side of the district is now, however, fairly well protected against flood by the Gandak embankment; and the Gogra and railway embankments afford partial protection on the other. Some parts still continue liable to be submerged, either by the local rivers and channels directly overflowing their banks or by the flood waters of the larger rivers forcing their way up them. At the same time, it is open to question whether the girdling of the district with embankments would be an unmitigated benefit, both because complete exclusion of river-water would deprive the land of part of its irrigation supply, as well as of a fertilising deposit of silt, and also because embankments, if not pierced by a sufficient number of sluices, prevent the water from flowing off, with the result that the floods take longer to flow off than they otherwise would.

NATURAL DIVISIONS.

There are no hills in Saran. Though the district presents the appearance of a level plain, the uniformity of which is broken here and there by the depressions and marshes dotted over the country, it may be divided into three distinct tracts, namely, the alluvial low lands adjoining the great rivers which are liable to be submerged periodically; the upland tract which is remote from their influence; and the *diara* lands in the beds of these rivers. The first two divisions call for no special description. They merge imperceptibly into each other, and there is no prominent feature to distinguish them, though their composition is different, the former being composed of new alluvium in which sand is found, and the latter of old alluvium which in many places contains the nodular limestone known as *kankar*. The *diara* lands, however, call for a more detailed description as they play an important part in the economy and administrative system of the district.

DIARAS.

The creation of these *diaras* or chars, as they are also called, is an interesting example of soil formation. Some back-water or curve of the river bed sets up an eddy in the current which thereupon becomes sufficiently stationary to deposit a portion of the sand which it holds in solution. The level of the *diara*, which is so far nothing but a heap of sand, then gradually rises as the water lying stagnant spreads a thin layer of clay and silt over the sand; and this deposit of silt deepens at every high flood until at last the *diara* rises above flood-level. The soil of such a *diara* is extremely fertile and grows magnificent crops. The fertility of the *diara* land is so great that people would frequently riot and engage in murderous assaults if there be any alleged encroachment. If, however, the growth of the *diara* is arrested by the river altering its course, the flood-water does not cover it during the second stage of its formation and it remains sandy and barren. Some of the fertile *diara* lands produce fine *bhadai* crops before the river rises and good *rabi* crops in the cold weather. Other *diaras* again may be all sand, and the good field of one year may be ruined by a deposit of sand the next. Cultivation on *diaras* is thus often a mere speculation.

Both riparian and river islands are constantly being destroyed and re-formed as the rivers sway from side to side, now eroding the land and now forming it. At one place, the river is cutting into its bank and washing away village sites and groves; at another point the shore is receiving an alluvial deposit to fill up the void left by the receding waters. Here, for instance, the Gogra may be encroaching on the Saran side, and a little farther down it sweeps round and cuts into the Balia district, now throwing up extensive *diaras* and now destroying them, as it tears down and cuts out new channels. These lands are the subject of perpetual dispute and frequent riots occur

entailing litigation which is of a complex nature owing to the difficulties of knowing whether the land is an accretion or a re-formation in *situ* and to the absence of fixed landmarks, as the great rivers every year carry on a continual process of destruction and renewal.

River System.

As mentioned above, there are three great boundary rivers, the Ganga, Gandak and Gogra which are navigable by large boats all the year round. These three rivers have a mythical and historical association. There is also a net-work of minor streams flowing into the Gogra or Ganga, many of which are fed by the overflow of the Gandak and dry up in the hot weather. These smaller streams, which divide the district into fairly well-marked portions, comprise the Jharahi, Khanwa, Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai, Gangri and Khatsa; the Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai and Gangri, all of which rise near the Gandak embankment, were utilised for what is known as the Saran canal system. Each of these principal streams has numerous small tributaries which as a rule take their rise in large swamps called *jhils*. For the most part they are mere overflow channels which relieve the lowlands of surplus water in the rains and at other seasons of the year dry up leaving stagnant pools or marshes in the deeper portions of their beds.

Alluvion and diluvion are constantly taking place along the banks of the Ganga, Gogra and Gandak. One bank of the river, on which the current strikes, is generally high and abrupt, while the other is shelving; but these characteristics are generally reversed in a short space of time. The high bank is gradually eaten away, and the current then turns to the opposite side, where a similar process is repeated. Farther down, large sand-banks form one year and are swept away the next and transfers of land to and from this and other districts are consequently frequent. The Gogra is, throughout its course, proverbial for the number and variety of these changes: and they also occur, though to a less extent, in the Ganga and Gandak.

The beds of the rivers are generally sandy, and the banks are cultivated as near to the water's edge as possible. Along the channels of the larger rivers, there are often large expanses of low land which are flooded in the rains but are sown later in the year with spring crops which always turn out well, owing to the rich layer of silt annually deposited. In some places during the dry season there is often a belt of tamarisk jungle between the river and the cultivated fields, and this is the first step in the conversion of the sandy riverain into arable soil.

Further description of the rivers and particularly floods has been given in the Chapter on Agriculture and Irrigation.

Lakes, properly so called, do not exist in the Saran district, but a vast number of broads or marshes called *chaurs* may be found after

the cessation of the rains. They used to contain water till well into the cold, and even into the hot weather and were the home of innumerable water-fowl. Most of the *chaurs* are drying up and are under cultivation. There is hardly any of the previous species of birds that used to visit these *chaurs* in thousands in winter.

The largest *chaur* known as the Hardia *chaur* extends from Sonepur 20 miles along the Gandak embankment and has a breadth varying from 2 to 5 miles and a depth of from 4 to 13 feet. It is formed by the backwaters of the Ganga in flood forcing their way up through the Gandaki or Mahinadi. Another large *chaur* is that near Mirzapur, which is 5 to 6 miles long and 2 to 3 miles broad. Other marshes are to be found near Manjhi, Ekma, Giaspur, Raghunathpur, Pipra, Dharmangta and Barauli. Those which dry soonest leave the ground saturated with moisture for the winter crops while in others where the water lies longer, a precarious crop of early rice is snatched before they are again covered with a sheet of water. A special feature of such marsh cultivation is the growth of a long-stemmed rice, which keeps pace in its growth with the rising of the flood water; no matter how high the latter rises, the rice keeps above the flood-level.

There are very few large tanks in the district and even the existing ones are now not in proper order. With the changes in the financial condition, people no longer excavate tanks.

GEOLOGY.

The district is composed of Indo-Gangetic alluvium, i.e., of silt brought down for ages past by the Ganga and its tributaries. The process of land formation has roughly been as follows: during the rainy season, the Ganga and its tributaries increase enormously in volume, carrying down vast quantities of silt or mud, with the result that they overflow into the adjacent country. When the water subsides again, the rivers in their retreat leave some of the silt which they have brought with them spread over the once flooded land as a thin soil deposit. This process has been repeated during thousands of years, and the land has thus been gradually growing and the surface of the land gradually raised. In the older alluvium, nodular seggregations of carbonate of lime, known as *kankar*, are found which are used largely to make lime and for road metalling. The soil is in many places saliferous, and the extraction of saltpetre has long been an important industry. There is no mineral wealth so far discovered in Saran district. This district was affected in the Bihar Earthquake of 1934 but escaped with lesser damages than the neighbouring districts of Champaran and Bhagalpur. The effects of the earthquake have been describled separately.

BOTANY.

Practically the whole of the district is under cultivation and supports a dense population; so close in consequence is the tilth that

in large areas field is conterminous with field, and the cultivated land abuts so closely on wayside and water course as to leave no foothold for those species that form roadside hedges and fill the weedy waste spaces. The level expanse of tilth is, however, diversified with bamboos, palms and mango orchards, or less frequently groves of other trees; in and about the villages themselves these groves are often accompanied by a number of tree weeds and semi-spontaneous more or less useful bushes and trees. The tracts liable to inundation are mainly confined to the banks of the larger rivers and are therefore often covered with a jungle of reeds and bushes, largely tamarisk, with a few trees. To the south, however, the river courses widen considerably in proportion to their streams and their beds contain little or no vegetation. In the rains the powerful current sweeps everything away and at other seasons the shingly or sandy banks are too dry to admit of much growth. But old river beds, marshes, lakes and such streams as are stagnant or nearly so, except after heavy rain, are almost as completely covered with vegetation as is the land while even small rivers with a gentle stream abound with water plants.

Though the district contains no forests, it was before well timbered, the most conspicuous trees being mango (*Mangifera indica*), *Sisu* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*), red cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*) and tamarind. The tree wealth has, however, considerably declined in the last three decades. The village sites are often embedded in groves of the Palmyra (*Borassus flabellifer*) and date-palm (*Phoenix sylvestris* and *Phoenix dactylifera*). The numerous mango orchards as observed before, no longer exist although there are still some, a marked feature of the landscape. The statistics of the Revisional Settlement of 1915—21 showed in round figures 60,000 acres of mango orchards, 458,000 *tar* trees and 120,000 *khajur* trees. There has been no further settlement and the present figures are not known. The surface of the district is highly cultivated but the banks of streams and patches of waste land are covered by a dry scrub jungle or shrubs of the order of *Euphorbiaceae*, *Butea* and other leguminous trees, and species of *Ficus Schleichera, Wendlandia* and *Gmelina*.

The principal trees yielding timber are *sisu*, jack or *kathar* (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), *babul* (*Acacia arbica*), *mahua* (*Bassia latifilia*), *bahera* (*Terminalia belerica*), *siris* (*Albizzia lebbek*), *jaman* (*Eugenia jambolana*), the mango, banyan and red cotton trees. All the species are still found although dwindled in number. Among the trees and plants yielding dyes mentioned by Middleton in the last Gazetteer were *kusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*), *palas* (*Butea frondosa*), the indigo plant and the *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*). Indigo is no longer cultivated. *Kusum* and *Palas* trees are also not very common now. It is doubtful if *Palas* trees were ever common enough to yield dye worth any mention. The *narkat* reed is common in marshes to the west of the district and is made into a course matting: the *sirka* reed which grows in drier localities is used for thatching and covering carts.

FAUNA.

Saran, the most densely populated and closely cultivated district of the Tirhut Division, offers few attractions to the sportsman. Every available acre has been brought under the plough and the consequence is that there are very few wild animals to be found now. Formerly both leopards and tigers were common but they have now completely disappeared. Even the stray leopards that used to come out and be shot in the district as mentioned by A. P. Middleton have not been recently heard of. They were wanderers from the jungle tracts to the north. The Indian wolf used to be common but is now rarely seen. Isolated specimens of the hyaena and wild dog noticed by Mr. A. P. Middleton in the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) are extremely rare now. Jackals, however, still abound. Middleton had mentioned three representatives of the Ungulata, namely, *nilgai* (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), black buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) and wild pig (*Sus cristatus*). The black buck has completely disappeared by now. Indiscriminate shooting is responsible for exterminating this beautiful species. The wild pigs, hordes of which offered an excellent sport to the European planters have also declined in their number. Only the specimen of *nilgai* remain but that is because some people wrongly take them to be of bovine species and would not shoot them. *Nilgais* do much damage to the crops.

BIRDS.

In the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* published in 1930 it was mentioned "The smaller game birds used to be numerous, the commonest being quail, snipe and duck, but they are all decreasing rapidly owing apparently to extensive netting and increased number of gun licenses. The common quail first appears in September or October but is not much seen till February or March when they are to be found in the *rabi* crops. The blue-breasted, the black-breasted and the button quail are now rarely seen. Black patridges are to be found in the jungles near the rivers and the grey sometimes in the west and south-west of the district. The lesser florican was formerly to be found but it is now probably extinct. The common snipe and jack snipe are still fairly common in the cold weather, also the painted snipe which disappears in the hot weather and returns to breed in the rains. The bar headed goose is found on the large rivers in the cold weather. At various times nineteen kinds of duck have been found but none are so numerous as formerly. Those which are still fairly common are the ruddy sheldrake or Brahmani, whistling teal, cotton teal, common teal, gadwal, widgeon, pintail, shoveller and red-crested pochard. Specimens of the smew (*Mergus albellus*) and goosander (*Merganser castor*) have been shot in the past but are not likely to be seen now ".

In the last three decades the position has become much worse. The Avifauna, both residents and visitors have declined very

considerably. Late Captain Harvey* who had studied the birds and their eggs in Saran district for decades thought that the following birds had disappeared from the district :—(1) Pallos Sea Eagle, (2) Black-winged kite, (3) Crest-honey buzzard. (4) Juggar falcon, (5) Red-headed marline, and (6) Bengal green pigeon. These birds were not numerous but bred regularly in the district.

One of the rarest birds in Saran district was the common Indian Nightjar. Captain Harvey thought that the district of Saran was at the moment the worst off for birds in Tirhut Division and far inferior to the districts of Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur in which he had done many years of collecting birds' eggs.

Many of the species of resident birds also have now declined. Most of winter visitors have ceased coming as the *jheels* and *chaurs* and waterlogged area have now been ploughed and the monsoon has become very irregular and deficient. The river beds also get drier much quicker. Due to the want of proper cover and environs the chances of mating and laying of eggs have become much less. The cultivation of the marginal lands like *chaurs*, the increasing number of gun licenses granted, the large number of *Bahelias* who live by indiscriminate netting of birds by a camouflage, the vagaries of the *Shikaris* who would even shoot during the close season are some of the reasons why we have lost our bird-wealth to a very considerable extent. Apart from the visitors we have also lost many of the residents like various species of *mynah*, *bulbul*, patridges, snipes and quails.

FISH.

The Ganga, Gogra and Gandak have edible fish, the most valuable of which belong to the carp family, such as *rahu* (*Labeo rohita*) and *katla* (*Catla buchanani*). *Hilsa* are also caught in the Ganga during the rains as they ascend from the sea but the hauls are getting smaller. It is strange that with these large rivers in the district there should be a poor fish market within the district and very little export of fish. The tanks are also getting disused and the fish of the tank is not large in quantity. The fishing season practically begins in October with the subsidence of the floods; the busy season is from November to March, the largest hauls being made in December, January and February.

Among other common varieties may be mentioned *piyas*, *buchwa*, *buari* and *arwari*. The *buari* is said to be one of the largest of the fish, attaining occasionally a weight of 80 lbs. The *arwari* is a small mullet with flesh of a delicate flavour which moves on the top of the water Crustaceous fish are common and prawns are caught in large numbers. Porpoises abound in the Ganga and tortoises are also common. The fish-eating alligator (*Gavialis gangeticus*), called

* The late Capt. Harvey was one of the collaborators for this revised District Gazetteer. (P.C.R.C.)

gharial is plentiful in the three principal rivers and is also found in smaller streams in the rains. The mugger or snubnosed crocodile is not nearly so common, being found only in the large rivers.

The most important fisheries are those in the Ganga, Gogra and Gandak, those in the first two being leased out annually by Government. But there are also valuable fisheries in the deeper swamps dotted over the district and in some of the larger tanks.

REPTILES.

Snakes are numerous, the most common being the deadly *karait* (*Bungarus coeruleus*), the *gahuman* or cobra (*Naia tripudians*) and the common water snake called *dhonra*.

CLIMATE.

The seasons in Saran are very similar to those in Muzaffarpur, being perhaps a little hotter. The hot weather begins about the middle of March, when hot westerly winds, often accompanied by dust-storms, begin to blow during the day. At night the wind comes generally from the east and the temperature is comparatively cool, being lowered by occasional thunder-storms; but the nights are extremely hot from the end of May till the first break of the monsoon. In a normal year the rains set in about the third week of June and continue with intermissions till about the end of September or the early part of October. September is generally a very trying month, the air being damp and steamy and the sun's rays extremely strong. The cold weather begins after the middle of October and continues till the beginning of March up to which time the days are still comparatively cool. This season is bracing and agreeable, at least from November till February; the day temperature is low, the air dry and the nights distinctly cold.

TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY.

The climate is on the whole hot and dry, and though the winter months are delightfully cool the heat is excessive in May and June According to the old figures the mean temperature varies from 62 in January to 89 in May, the mean maximum from 73 in January to 100 in April and May and the mean minimum from 50 in January to 79 in June and August; humidity ranges from 57 per cent of saturation in April to 88 per cent in August. Statistics kept at the Sepaya Agricultural Farm during part of 1928 give some interesting and rather unexpected results; it appears that the three hottest days of the year all occurred in April while the number of days on which a shade temperature of 100 or over was reached was distributed as follows: four in April, seven in May, one in June, none in July, five in August, ten in September and two in October.

It is unfortunate that the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book* of 1955 does not mention any station in Saran district in Table 10 of this

book giving the "Statement showing the Annual Temperature and Humidity" as recorded at different stations in Bihar. However, a discussion of the trends of rainfall till recent years, taken up in the following section, shows that there has not been any marked change in either the degree of temperature and humidity or in its distribution throughout the year.

Rainfall.

The average rainfall for the district obtained from thirteen recording stations for a varying number of years is 45.03 inches. The rainfall is capricious; for the ten years 1919—1928 it varied from 30.38 in 1928 and 33.41 in 1927 to 57.38 in 1922 and 62.25 in 1921. A total fall of over 80 inches was recorded in 1871. In ordinary years the monsoon breaks in June which has an average rainfall of 6.47 inches and a monthly fall of 12.04 inches is reached in July. The maximum monthly fall (12.45 inches) is reached in August after which it drops to 7.89 in September and to 2.26 in October after which the rainfall is negligible. November and December are much the driest months in the year both in average rainfall and in average number of rainy days in a month.

Statistics of the rainfall at selected recording stations are given below for the cold weather (November to February), the hot weather (March to May) and the rainy season (June to October). the figures shown being the average in each case :—

Station.	Year recorded.	November to February.	March to May.	June to October.	Annual average.
Chapra ..	51	1.52	2.16	39.39	43.07
Siwan ..	51	1.59	2 27	43.11	46.97
Gopalganj ..	42	1.43	2.80	41.62	45.85
Basantpur ..	17	1.40	2.60	45.42	49.42
Sepaya ..	6	.85	2.74	37.94	41.53

As against the averages taken down through the selected recording stations, some of the statements from the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book, 1955*, published by the Central Bureau of Economics and Statistics shall be of interest :—

Statement showing the average rainfall in inches in the district of Saran.

Year.	Average rainfall in inches.
1943-44	38.13
1946-47	51.92
1947-48	38.37
1948-49	49.17

Year.				Average rainfall in inches.
1949-50	..	..	..	48.46
1950-51	..	..	..	36.48
1951-52	..	..	..	36.74
1952-53	..	..	..	43.18
1953-54	..	..	..	69.41
1954-55	..	..	..	32.26
1955-56	..	..	..	47.50
Normal	..	..	..	44.91

Regarding the monthly rainfall in inches in the district of Saran the following statement gives the record during 1953-54, 1954-55 and 1955-56 :—

Statement showing monthly rainfall in inches in the district of Saran during 1953-54, 1954-55 *and* 1955-56.

Month.		1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.
March	..	0.04	Nil	0.03
April	..	1.00	Nil	0.41
May	.	1.17	0.45	0.41
June	..	12.39	3.08	9.30
July	..	19.50	10.91	15.28
August	..	12.69	12.56	11.38
September	..	20.72	4.36	8.12
October	..	0.93	0.28	1.02
November	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
December	..	0.03	Nil	Nil
January	..	0.40	0.20	0.55
February	..	0.45	0.42	1.00
Total for the year		69.41	32.26	47.50

This statement is also taken from the *Bihar Statistical Hand Book*, 1955.

The monthly normal rainfall for Saran district in inches is as follows :—

March	..	..	..	0.29
April	..	..	..	0.28
May	..	..	..	1.39
June	..	..	..	6.50
July	..	..	..	12.41
August	..	..	..	11.78
September	..	..	..	8.59
October	..	..	.	2.10
November	..	..	..	0.26
December	..	..	..	0.15
January	..	..	..	0.48
February	..	..		0.48
	Total	..	..	44.91

The average rainfall for the district as taken note of in the last District Gazetteer runs to 45.03 inches, whereas the recent (1958) average normal rainfall to 44.91 inches as mentioned in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*. A difference of 12 inches seems to have come up in the normal pattern, which expresses nearly a stationary trend. Rather allowing for the calculating inconsistencies like inadequate number of recording stations or the absence of most up-to-date instruments or even lacking sincerity of purpose of the recorder, the averages do show an unchanging pattern of rainfall in the district. What is more remarkable is that even the distribution of rainfall concurs with that of the twenties and thirties, referred to in last District Gazetteer. For example an average rainfall of 6.47 inches in the month of June and 12.04 inches in the month of July has been noted in the last District Gazetteer, whereas these figures are 6.50 and 12.41 respectively in the *Statistical Hand-Book* quotations. The month of maximum average rainfall is August in both the statements, which month ends with initiating a gradually decreasing average rainfall. And in both alike the months of November and December with a conspicuously low rainfall present the driest months in the year. The total average rainfall for the years referred to in the last District Gazetteer and in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, also are similar in as much as their range of difference from the normal average is concerned.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

The modern district of Saran, in ancient days, formed a part of Kosala country. Any history of the present district of Saran is bound to be a history of Kosala which included portions other than the present limits of the district. As we shall see later the present district limits came into existence only in 1866. Strictly speaking there could hardly be any parochial history of any district in Bihar in the periods prior to its formation under the British rule. Both the Pali and Sanskrit literatures, as well as ancient and mediaeval inscriptions, mention two Kosalas; *Uttara* Kosala and *Dakshina* Kosala or Maha Kosala. Saran and the neighbouring districts in U. P. were known as *Uttara* Kosala (North Kosala). Kosala as a country was unknown to the *Rig Vedic* hymn singers. It is in later Vedic literature that Kosala is mentioned as a powerful, respected *Kshattriya* kingdom. In this period it is no longer sufficient to dismiss Saran by stating that " Saran, lying on one of the main lines of the Aryan advance was probably occupied at an early period by Aryan races ", as has been done in the previous Gazetteers. Subsequent researches have established that Saran played a glorious role throughout and not merely as a contemptuous eastern borderland of the Kosala country. Its strategical importance is undeniable, since on its border, on the other bank of the Gandak, commenced the territories of Janakas of Videha. History of Kosala is the history of all its component parts; and not merely that of Saketa, Ayodhya or Sravasti.

It is necessary to discuss the sources of Saran's history in the context of the spirit of revised Gazetteers so that the men in the streets, the scholars, the research workers, the students and last but not the least the revenue officers, with the exception of those who had studied advanced history in their university days, will be able to appreciate the extent of our knowledge and what services they can render to the State, nation and the people. In this respect the responsibilities of the average revenue, administrative and even police officers of all ranks cannot be over-emphasized, because, on them rests the greatest charge of the nation, to record and to help to preserve examples of our national heritage, lying buried or unknown in some unfrequented corner of the district. The College Professors or the field archaeologists cannot usher in that utopia which would enable them to bridge the long hiatuses of our national history without the co-operation of the administrative officers and particularly the administrative heads of the districts.

Our principal sources are literary, since no inscription or coin of the earliest period of Saran's history has so far been discovered.

The excavations at Vaisali and Sonitpur, have no doubt thrown some welcome light on this 'dark period'; but they relate to ancient Videha and Karusha countries. What is more, the excavated materials throw little light on political, social and economic history of Saran. The literary evidence may be divided into five groups: (1) The last book of the *Atharva Veda, Brahmanas*, etc., and Upanishads, (2) The *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas*, (3) Panini, *Arthasastra*, *Nirukta* and *Mahabhashya*, (4) Pali literature. (5) Jaina Sanskrit and Prakrit compositions, (6) Classical Greek and Latin works.

In the later Vedic literature, the eastern regions gained greater prominence, showing the gradual extension of geographical horizon. Specially this is the case with Kosala. The extent, however, of this country Kosala differed from time to time. Thus according to Dr. Keith their earliest mention shows that Videha-Kosala was a United Kingdom. Para, the son of Atnara, who performed a *Asvamedha* sacrifice is referred to as lord of Kosala as well as Videha.* But a tradition found in the *Satapatha Bramhana* seems to indicate that Videha was Aryanised after Kosala whose western limit was the river Sadanira, identified with Gandak, which even now forms the eastern boundary of Saran.

An analysis of the relevant passages of the *Ramayana* indicates that in early days, Kosala consisted of Oudh and Allahabad districts.† In connection with the *Rajasuya* sacrifice of Yudhishthira it is stated that Arjuna, Krishna and Bhima reached Mithila after traversing eastern Kosala—possibly Saran‡. The Kosala king, who was defeated was known as Brihadvala, who later attended the ceremonies in connection with the sacrifice. Soon after this, Karna seems to have occupied Kosala (*Vanapavan*, Chapter 253, p. 513); because in the Kurukshetra war, Brihadvala is found fighting with the Kauravas (Udyogaparvan, 96, 107). His son was Sukshetra, who also fought in the war. Kosala was again annexed by Arjuna, before the horse sacrifice of Yudhishthira.

According to the Puranas, the royal dynasty of Kosala was descended from Ikshaku. His son Vikukshi was a powerful ruler who desired to be carried on the shoulders of the Indian Zeus, Indra. Sixth in descent from Vikukshi was Sravasta, after whom the city of Sravasti, a later capital of Kosala was named. A few generations later was born Mandhata. The other distinguished monarchs of Kosala were Trisanku, Harishchandra of Sunahsepa fame, Sagara, Bhagiratha and Rituparna, who employed Nala as his charioteer, etc.

Kosala as a Mahajanapada.

In Pali texts, Saran appears, not as the champion of imperialism, but, as one of the sixteen *mahajanapadas* in which India was divided.

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. 1, page 109.

† *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1894, pp. 321 ff.

‡ Sabhaparvan, Chap. XXV, page 420.

The kingdom of Kosala was bounded on the west by Panchala, by the river Sarpika (Sai) in the south, on the east by Sadanira (Gandak) and on the north by Nepal. This was *Uttara* Kosala and consisted of modern Fyzabad, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur and Deoria districts in U. P. and Saran in Bihar. The Sakyas of Kapilavastu were included in the Kosala country.* The Pali literature undoubtedly throws flood of light on the political, economic, social, religious and cultural life of ancient Kosala; but just as it is not possible to establish the historicity of all the kings of the *pauranic* lists, so it is not possible to discriminate between the legendary and the factual elements contained in the Pali tradition.

Kasi and Kosala.

It was inevitable, that Kosala monarchy was unable to maintain its supremacy unchallenged for a long time; and this is what happened in the case of Kasi. In the first stage, the legendary king of Kasi, Bramhadatta, invaded Kosala and defeated its army; *de jure* sovereign of Kosala fled to Kasi, to hide himself, but ultimately he was apprehended and ordered to be beheaded. The kingdom was ultimately restored to his son.† On the other hand the *Mahasilava Jataka* tells us that, the kingdom of Kasi was conquered by the Kosalas. The *Asataru Jataka* also records another occupation of Varanasi by the Kosalas. We may therefore conclude by stating that according to the tradition recorded in the *Jatakas,* there was no love lost between the two neighbouring kingdoms; and sometimes they were also connected by matrimony.

PROTO-HISTORIC PERIOD.

All these events occurred before the accession to the throne of Kosala of Prasenajit. He was a contemporary of Gautama, the 7th Buddha, and was the son of Mahakosala. He consolidated the extensive conquests of his father. His character has been admirably summed up by Mrs. Rhys Davids. "He is shown combining like so many of his class all the world over, a proneness to affairs of sex with the virtues and affection of a good 'family man', indulgence at the table with an equally natural wish to keep in good physical form, a sense of honour and honesty shown in his disgust at legal cheating, with a greed for acquiring wealth and war indemnities, and a fussiness over lost property, a magnanimity towards a conquered foe with a callousness over sacrificial slaughter and the punishment of criminals. Characteristic also is both his superstitious nervousness over the sinister consequence of dreams due, in reality to disordered appetites, and also his shrewd politic care to be on good terms with all religious orders, whether he had testimonials to their genuineness

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* *Jataka,* Vol. III, page 342; *Indian Historical Quarterly,* 1931, page 412.

† *Vinaya,* Vol. I, p. 343, ff; *Jataka,* Vol. III, p. 221, ff.

or not".* He was a great patron of both the Bramhanical and Buddhist religions; and endowed the learned institutions, the *savants* and monks of both.

Prasenajit and Brumhins.

Many of the Bramhanical scholars were old, aged, elderly and advanced in years. They were designated '*Mahasala*' (महासाल), implying according to some, men of substance, influence and position; according to others, it implied Vedic institutions meant for advanced students. Each head of the institution, used to reside in a palace, with vast landed possessions, consisting of grass lands, woods and cultivations, from royal domains, with as much power over it as the King himself. In consequence, these great Bramhanical teachers of Kosala, became rich and powerful. The Pali texts supply us with the names of many. Each one of these was established in a distinct locality with control over revenue, judicial and civil administrations. Each of them was honoured as scholars of international reputations, well versed in the *Vedas*, *Vedangas* and *Itihasa*. Saran must have had many such, since it was the easternmost district of Kosala.

Prasenajit and Ajatasatru.

Ajatasatru, notwithstanding lack of filial devotion, was first to put an end successfully to the great days of Kosala. The traditional account is available in the *Jatakas* and *Samyutta Nikaya*. The trouble started with the few villages that had been given to Kosaladevi, mother of Ajatasatru, by Mahakosala—her father, as bath money. Prasenajit to avenge the murder of Bimbisara and untimely death of his heart-broken sister, declared war on his parricide nephew. The actions were indecisive—both the parties enjoyed temporary victories over the other. On one occasion, Prasenajit having been defeated had to fly the country. On another occasion Ajatasatru was taken prisoner. Prasenajit gave his daughter Vajira in marriage to his captive, along with the disputed villages to his daughter. The end, however, was swift and unforeseen. Digha Charayana was a general of Prasenajit. By a *coup d' etat* he raised Prince Vidudhava to the throne. The situation is not clear, but it appears that deserted both by his army and people, the most Catholic and the last great Kosala monarch, went to solicit armed intervention of his nephew and son-in-law Ajatasatru, but died at the very gates of Rajgir, due to exposure. Final annexation was not far away.

HISTORICAL PERIOD.

Saisunagas, Nandas and Mauryas.

The Haryanka dynasty, to which Bimbisara and Ajatasatru belonged, was replaced on the age-old throne of Magadha, by a new

* Sage and King in Kosala—Samyutta—*Bhandarkar Commemoration Volumes* page 134.

line of kings, named Saisunagas, from the name of the founder—Sisunaga. He transferred his capital from Rajgir to Pataliputra although Vaisali was visited occasionally. Evidently ancient Videha country was more comfortable than Rajgir with its dynastic associations. The Saisunagas were supplanted by the Nandas, whose first king was called Mahapadma-Nanda. They were Sudras.* The Puranas credit Mahapadma-Nanda as destroyer of all Kshattriyas. This as pointed out by late Dr. H. C. Roy Choudhury, possibly implies the extinction of all the dynastics which ruled in Northern India, contemporaneously with the Harayankas. The end of the Kosalan independence is probably testified by the tradition recorded in the *Katha-Sarita-Sagara*, that king Nanda had one of his camps established at Ayodhya.

The Nanda dynasty was overthrown by Chandragupta-Maurya. The inclusion of whole Kosala including Saran in India's first historical empire is undeniable. This evidence is available at Chirand, with its dilapidated and completely renovated mosque, originally built in the time of Alauddin Husain Shah of Bengal. It has supplied the evidence of Proto-Historic and historic occupations Situated conveniently at a place where the great river Ganges could be crossed like Hajipur, Sahebpur-Kamal, Sahebganj-Manihari, Buxar, etc.,† it has an undeniable importance, which seems to have escaped the eye of antiquarians. The Ganga has changed its course now; and in doing so, has cut through a portion of the ruins of the ancient city, exposing a cliff like sequence, contained in layers and layers of occupational remains with unpainted Greyware and N. B. P. mixed up in the mud and brick walls as well as ring well soak-pits.

In Upper India, a large number of sites over a wide area, are distinguished by the occurrence of a highly individualistic pottery, called formerly, by the archæologists as 'Northern Black Polished Pottery'. Since, however, it has been found in several places in the Deccan too, the terminology had to be changed slightly, to 'Neo Black Polished Pottery' so that the abbreviation N. B. P. would not lead to confusion. This ware has been variously called as glaze, mucilaginous paint. metallic lustre, etc. Over a grey or sometimes buff or pinkish body, the colour of its surface varies from black to metallic jet blue, gold, silver. mauve or orange gold, etc.: but its lustre (shiny surface) is quite different from other 'slips' or 'washes'. They have been found at Taxila (West Pakistan), Mathura, sites in Allahabad, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Ghazipur, Balliya, Etah districts in U. P., and numerous sites in Bihar, like Patna, Sonitpur (Gaya), Indpe (Monghyr), Nathnagar (Bhagalpur), Rajgir, Ciriyek, Vaisali, etc.,

* The point has been fully discussed in the Revised Patna Gazetteer under publications. (P. C. R. C.)

† That is it was a convenient ferry.

Dinajpur in East Pakistan, Indore, Jaipur, Bhopal districts of Madhya Bharat.

According to late Sir John Marshell, they were found in stratas ascribed by him to C. 800 B. C., at Bhita, in Allahabad district, which has been questioned by Sir R. E. Mortimer Wheeler. But the excavations carried out by the K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, Patna, at Sonitpur, has confirmed him partially. Outside Northern India, wherever it has been found in systematic excavations, it is associated with Mauryan and Post-Mauryan layers. In this, one feels inclined to visualise its diffusion with the Mauryan conquests, although it would be somewhat premature to be dogmatic at this stage. The popularity of N. B. P. ware was undoubtedly extensive; Eastern Rajputana, Western, South and Eastern India, all used it in some quantity. In places located at a distance from its manufacturing centre, whose identity remains uncertain it was precious and in short supply, as some sites have yielded broken pots which have sometimes been rivetted with copper pins to prolong their life. They might have also served ritualistic purposes. Dish and bowls are the common types.

The occurrence of N. B. P. at Chirand, unmistakably proves the existence of a great commercial emporium of the Mauryan times in Saran. Not merely that, it was an important centre for the river-borne trade, the national navigational highway to the international ports in the Gangetic delta. More than that, it was a great mart for exchange of commodities, since the products of the western districts of Kosala and Videha including agricultural, could easily find whole-salers at Pataliputra for North Bihar, Gaur and for overland trade routes to take them to Ujaini, Bharukachchha (Broach) and Taxila. The mounds on which the Muslim tombs are located; and the high clay ridges beyond the mosque also contain N. B. P.; indicating their existence, when Mauryan legions had hurled the Greeks beyond the Hindukush and were flying the Indian flag from the Oxus to the Krishna and from Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal. The age of the unpainted grey ware is still unsettled. Many of these were originally N. B. P., but the lustrous polish having peeled of look like a totally different class of ware.

Brihadratha, the last Mauryan king, was murdered by his General—called Pushyamitra, who having usurped the throne, founded the Sunga dynasty.

Sungas.

Panini, describes the Sungas as Brahmins of the *Bharadvaja gotra*. The existence of Pushyamitra is also confirmed by an inscription found at Ayodhya, which describes the generalissimo as *Kosaladhipa'* (lord of Kosala) and *Senapati* (General). Though the contents of the inscription have raised a storm of controversy, due to its incomplete state they will always remain moot points. The record was

discovered by Jagannathdas Ratnakara and edited by him. G. H. Ojha discussed it in the same journal and elsewhere.* Late Dr. K. P. Jayaswal, who was then editing the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela jointly with his friend R. D. Banerji, has contributed three papers on it. The other persons were: N. K. Bhattasali, N. G. Mazumdar and Dr. A. Banerji Sastri.† The inscription is inscribed on a stone slab on the foot of the eastern entrance of the *samadhi* of Sangad Baksh, alleged to have been erected by Nawab Shujauddaula. The building is situated at the western portion of a large enclosure known as 'Ranopali', about a mile from the town of Ayodhya.

The Inscription

The epigraph is important for more than one reasons to the historian of Saran. It is the first and only inscription which mentions Pushyamitra by name. So long, he was only known from Patanjali, Kalidasa and Buddhist Sanskrit traditions. Secondly, it confirms the *Puranas* that Pushyamitra was a General. Thirdly, it also describes him or his descendant, as ruling over Kosala. What is more, it credits Pushyamitra with having performed 'Horse sacrifice' twice. Therefore, the fact that Saran with the rest of Kosala, was a part of the Sunga dominion is undeniable. The grammarian Patanjali throws some interesting side-lights about Pushyamitra. In his commentary on Panini III.2.123, Patanjali says "Here we are causing Pushyamitra to perform sacrifice (as officiating priests)". Pushyamitra died about the middle of the second century B. C., and was succeeded by Agnimitra made famous by Kalidasa in his *Malavikagnimitram*. The last king of the dynasty was dissolute and weak. Banabhatta, the author of *Harshacharitra*, tells us that the over libidinous Sunga was murdered by his *Amatya* Vasudeva, with the help of a maid-servant disguised as his queen.‡

Post-Sunga.

The dynasty founded by Vasudeva, is known as *Kanvayana* or *Sunga bhrityas*. Their chronology has yet to be settled. While Magadha after its first imperialistic glaciation was leaving extensive detritus of cultural and political decompositions; the Greeks crossed the unguarded passes of the Hindukush and established themselves in Afganisthan and West Pakistan. Patanjali in his *Mahabhashya* has left certain evidence about Greek advance in the Ganga Valley. Commenting on Panini III.2.111, on the affixing of *lan* to a verbal

* *Nagari Pracharini Sabha Patrika. Kasi*, Vol. V, pp. 99—104 and 201 ff.; *Annual Report of the Rajputana Museum, for the year ending 31st March* 1924.

† *Modern Review*, 1924. pp. 30—32; *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol. X, pp. 202—208; *Ibid.* Vol. XIII. pp. 247—49; *Modern Review*, 1925. p. 202 ff; *Ibid*, pp. 59-60; and *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. VII, pp. 160—63.

‡ *Harsha-Charitam* has been translated into Hindi by Dr. V. S. Agrawalla.

root, he states " Lan affixes added to verbal root denote universally known (action) that (happened) out of sight but within range of sight (knowledge) of the narrator ". Kaiyata, the scholiast of Patanjali, clarifies it in the following way: " something that is 'out of sight' (*parokshe*) on account of its actually not being perceived is within the range of sight, if it is only capable of being witnessed; so there is no contradiction ". To put it in simple language, the rule explains, how to narrate in a grammatically correct way an incident of which the speaker was not an eye witness, but knew it to have happened recently or within public memory. As examples Patanjali states: " *arunad Yavanah Saketam*, etc." The *Yavana* (the Greeks) besieged Saketa. It was a capital of ancient Kosala and was situated in Oudh. Therefore we may accept, that in the life-time of Patanjali, Saketa in Fyzabad district of U. P., had been beseiged by the Greeks.

In 1914, H. Hargreaves while excavating the area to west of the Main temple at Sarnath, the ancient Dear Park, was fortunate enough to find several heads with provincial Greek crowns consisting of laurels and merlons. None of them had been found in their proper archæological context. They had been violently treated in antiquity, and had suffered arson and vandalism. They were utilised by later builders from whose building they were recovered. All the objects of this class bore traces of polish; and has rightly been ascribed to the late Mauryan period*. It is irrelevant for our purpose, either to discuss the religious or iconographic significance of the heads, or whether they were protrait heads or not. *Prima facie*, we have to accept the evidence that they had been established at *Migadava* (Sarnath, district Varanasi, U. P.), the Buddhist holy of holies, the place where historical Buddhism was first preached by the 7th Buddha—Gautama. Surely no Indian could have done it, because, his sudden admiration for provincial Greek divinities or statues of Greek royalties at the Deer Park, at the cost of Indian nationalism and an Indian religion is inexplicable. Even the alleged anti-Buddhist attitude of Pushyamitra is an inadequate and far-fetched explanation.

The parochialism of certain scholars in U. P., have led to the explanation that Varanasi being a great centre of commerce, the Greek merchants probably established them. Actually the material is exotic in U. P., in general and Varanasi in particular, where for millenniums, the architects and sculptors have consistently used buff sandstone of Chunar. But, why should the people of ancient *Kasi* kingdom, permit foreigners to establish these images or statues where the 'wheel of law' of Buddhism was first turned, as a mark of impotence of the Indians to guard their holy places passes human comprehension. The rational answer possibly lies in the recognition of the objective evidence they supply of the Greek raid up to Varanasi, after the siege of Saketa, referred to by Patanjali Saran, *terra-incognita* to Indian

* Sunga Sculptures in Banares—A study--*Roopa Lekha*, New Delhi, Vol. XXIII, pp. 20—36.

archæologists, has however, yielded some material of this nature. This is the find of Indo-Bactrian coins in the village of Papuar in Siwan subdivision, three miles east of Siwan, as noticed by Dr. Hoey.* These few coins may or may not prove Greek occupation of Saran, but it is significant that Saketa was one of the capitals of the Kosala kingdom. What is more, the celebrated astronomer Varahamira, in his *Brihat Samhita* (I. 38),† states that the Greeks reached as far as Pataliputra.

Sakas and the Kushanas.

In the first century before the birth of Christ, the *Sakas* displaced the Greeks in Baluchistan, Kafiristan, Peshawar, Sindh and probably Hazara district of West Pakistan. One line of satraps (*Ksharapas*) established themselves at Mathura. But their advance in the Gandak Valley need not be seriously entertained. They were followed by a people known as the Imperial Kushanas. The greatest of these was Kanishka. The coins of the Kushanas are found in hundreds at a small deserted sites in Basti district and have also been met with in Gorakhpur, Balliya (Khairagarh) and Deoria districts of U. P. In Bihar, Patna, Belvadag in Ranchi district, Buxar in Shahabad district. Bedivan in Champaran district have yielded Kushana coins. Three copper Kushana coins were found at Belwa, including one of king Kanishka. They are now in the Patna Museum. Inscriptions of Kanishka have been found at Sarnath and at Sahet-Maheth (in Gonda district)—ancient Sravasti, for a long time, the capital of the Kosala country. All these indicate the possibility of Saran having formed a part of the Kushana empire.

Dark Period.

"The History of India during the third century A. D., for which reliable sources of information are lacking, has been rightly characterised as one of general obscurity, when with the extinction of the Kushana and the Andhra empires, the country must have been split up, as suggested by the *Puranas,* into a number of independent states ruled by princes of different families, native or foreign, probably fighting amongst themselves for superiority"‡ It was at this time that Ptolemy mentions a people called *Murundas* as *Mourandai.* The Vayu Purana mentions a *mlechcha* tribe called the *Murunda.* If Ptolemy could be relied upon, then they would have to be placed somewhere in North Bihar. The identity of the *Murundas* is clarified by later commentator like Hemachandra, who identified them with the 'Lampakas' who lived near the Kabul river. It shows that even in the time of Hemachandra, the fact that *Sakas* had come from the north was well-known. The word *Murunda* is a *Saka* term. The

* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* 1900 pp. 80 ff.

† The verse to certain extent is met with in *Gargi Samhita* too. Probably an ancient plagiarism JBORS. Vol. XIV, page 402.

‡ B. C. Sen—*Some Historical Aspects of Inscriptions of Bengal, page* 200.

Saka language is now extinct. Translated into Sanskrit it means a 'lord of the *Sakas*', the exact Indian equivalent being *Svamin,* which has been used by many *Saka* rulers of India. It is these people, who are possibly referred to as Magas, in Bihar folk tradition. According to some ethnologists the Bhuinhars are descended from these *Saka-Kushana* tribes.

Later on possibly, Devarakashitas, mentioned in the *Puranas* as enjoying sovereignty of Kosala, Pundra (North Bengal including Saharsa and Purnea districts), Odra, etc., ruled over the areas. Still later, western part of the *Kosala* country, that is Oudh, was occupied by the Guptas, since the *Puranas* mention Saketa as a part of the territories of the Guptas. That Saran was included in the empire of the Guptas nobody can deny.

IMPERIAL GUPTAS.

The evidence is furnished by the tradition about the origins of the Guptas. It is not correct to state that "Gupta families or clans existed in India from very early times".* But, persons having the term 'Gupta' affixed to their names are indeed known from the records of the Andhras, Barhut inscriptions and other early Bramhi epigraphs. In the Gupta inscriptions, the first two members of the dynasty are not given great deal of importance; and due to lack of evidence, we have to leave undecided, the question whether they were independent or not. The epithet *Lichchhavi-dauhitra* in Gupta records, and a class of coins issued by them which bear on one side (obverse), the figures and names of Chandagupta I and Kumaradevi, and on the back side (reverse), a goddess seated on a lion along with the legend *Lichchhavayah,* are indeed significant. The ancient Lichchhavi people survived till the fourth century of the Christian era, and then completely vanished like similar republican tribes elsewhere in India. They used royal titles while enjoying a (republican) oligarchical constitution; because Kautalya says that they were *rajasabdopajivinah.* That is, they used royal honorifics and were not enjoying any 'hereditary monarchical constitution in actual practice'.

According to Pargeiter the Puranas furnish the information that "Kings born of the Gupta race will enjoy all these territories, namely, along the Ganges, Prayaga, Saketa and Magadha". Prayaga is old Vatsa country, made immortal by Bhasa, in modern Allahabad district with portions of Fatehpur, Varanasi and Mirzapur districts. Saketa as already noted stands for Oudh, whose capital it was. Magadha consisted of present Patna, Gaya and Shahabad districts. But the identity of the country 'along the Ganges' (*Anu-Ganga*), has never been established. Beyond Allahabad and Ayodhya were Antarvedi (Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna) and north and south Panchala countries. But the country to the east of Allahabad and

* R. C. Majumdar and A. S. Altekar—*The Vakataka Gupta Age,* 1954, page 116.

Varanasi runs always along the Ganga and it may be said that Ghazipur, Balliya and Saran are indicated.* These were the home territories of the Guptas. Now we are in a position to assess correctly the reasons of emphasis on the relationship with the Lichchhavis. The diplomatic marriage with a Lichchhavi lady cemented the way, like French and Spanish royal marriages in mediæval Europe, to establish a legal claim over the territories of the Lichchhavis. It is undeniable that Samudragupta and his descendants had Lichchhavi blood in their veins from the mother's side; and, therefore, the Guptas ruled North Bihar, not as conquerers but as legitimate successors of the ancient republican tribe. The motive behind issuing conjugate figures with the characteristic legend and the stress laid by the panygerists of the Gupta emperors on this fact, admittedly an empty hyperbole, was to keep alive in public memory the close connections that existed between the Guptas and their predecessors. *Argumentum ex silento* is a dangerous pit-fall, much that did not actually happen and great deal of imaginary facts can be deduced by the fertile faculty of deduction. But evidence will never be forthcoming on many questions, except to permit us to infer the possibilities and probabilities within limits. That probability was in this case to counteract the centuries old republican spirit of ancient Videha country and attempts of any adventurer to establish a claim of *de jure* sovereignty.

POST-GUPTA PERIOD.

Dr. R. S. Tripathi has correctly pointed out "The latter half of the fifth century A.D. was a period of great ferment in Northern India, as it saw the beginning of that process which ultimately undermined the stability of the Imperial Gupta dynasty".† The history of this period and not merely that of Saran, but whole of India, is very obscure and has given rise to a spate of theories. The reconstructions are plausible but are by no means convincing except to the authors themselves. Dr. B. P. N. Sinha has hazarded the existence of a third Kumaragupta, while accusing others of improbable and far-fetched notions. In order to make an elastic chronology he guesses the possible extension of Skandagupta's reign by a year for which there is absolutely no evidence. Even Dr. A. S. Altekar found it difficult to support his theory of a third Kumaragupta, except to point out its possibility at a later date in a footnote.‡ Yet his whole chronology is based on these hypothetical assumptions. The history of the Gupta dynasty after the death of Buddhagupta (C. 496 A. D.) is imperfectly known. A second Huna invasion seems to have taken place in the last decade of the fifth century A. D. They overran

* e g., *anugangam Varanasi* referred to by Patanjali and translated by Dr. B. N. Puri as Varanasi, situated on the river Ganga. B. N. Puri—*India in the time of Patanjali*, 1957, page 82. This work however is extremely uncritical.

† R. S. Tripathi—*History of Kanauj*, 1937, page 20.

‡ B P. N Sinha—*Decline and Fall of the Gupta Empire*, 1954, pp. 22 ff; A. S. Altekar—*The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, 1957, page 9, footnote,

West Pakistan, East Punjab and Rajasthan and penetrated up to Malwa; but were completely checked there. This, however, did not prolong the life of the empire, which was in its death agonies. Yasodharman of Malwa, an erstwhile ally, led his army across the whole empire and reached up to Brahmaputra river in North Bengal. He might have passed through Saran, Muzaffarpur, Purnea, etc. The glories of the Imperial Guptas of Magadha went out in shame and disaster.

One by one, the provinces separated. First to go was Saurashtra and Western Malwa. In Thanesvara, Naravardhana established the Pushpabhuti dynasty, whose last prince was Harsha. In the home land of the Guptas, Maukharis, probably one of the former imperial feudatories, established themselves at Kanauj. In Magadha, descendants of Samudragupta and Chandragupta were displaced by a new Gupta family whose first member was Krishnagupta. It is clear, that by 540 A. D. the Imperial Gupta dynasty had made their silent exit.

What happened to the eastern districts of Kosala, we have no precise information. As in the case of Chirand, discussed in a previous section, the Ganga Valley was the centre of commercial life of Northern India. The seaports of eastern India were the main outlet of the commodities, which were either transported by the Ganga or carried overland. When crowns and kings were cheap, the river navigation was likely to have proved safer. Any monarch having a rudimentary knowledge of economics perceived, that unless and until, the nerve centres of this great plain, that is the Doab, Magadha, Kosala, Tirhut were in their possession, then empty exchequer will not be able to finance their ambitious schemes, notwithstanding loot and rapine. The history of the subsequent centuries reveal these factors in all their nakedness. Unfortunately our data are extremely meagre and absence of excavations in North Bihar and Eastern U. P., has prevented the spade from coming to our aid. In consequence, it is difficult to state categorically, whether the Maukharis or the later Guptas enjoyed any permanent foothold in Saran and adjoining districts. Dr. R. S. Tripathi has observed "Excluding Asirgarh and Nimand, we may, therefore, summarily say that during its fullest expansion the Maukhari kingdom of Kanauj extended up to Ahichchhatra and the frontier of the Thaneshwar kingdom on the west: to Nalanda on the east; on the north *it may have* touched the Tarai district; and on the south it probably did not go beyond the southern boundaries of the present United Provinces" *

Early Mediæval Period.

Harsha.

The last Maukhari king lost his life about 606 A. D. and Harsha of Thaneshwar annexed the ancient throne of Kanauj. The story of Harsha is quite well-known. Internecine war had weakened all

* R. S. Tripathi—*op. cit.*, page 55.

the princes of Northern India. Sasanka, king of Karnasuvarna and the hill tracts of Rajmahal, South Monghyr, Gaya and Shahabad failed to carry on war on two fronts and had to retire to the jungle tracts of Chotanagpur and Orissa. To complicate matters, the extent of Harsha's empire will always remain a moot point, but Saran might have been included in it, since a copper plate found at Madhuban records the grant of land in the Sravasti *bhukti* (division) in which Saran was included. Since his relations with Mithila and Nepal are also historically proved we shall not be wrong in assuming that Saran probably did form a part of Harsha's dominions.

Belwa is a small village in Gopalganj subdivision of Saran situated about five and a half miles north-west of Gopalganj. In this village there were two mounds known as *Bhairo-ka-asthan* and Bhar mound. The first one yielded a large image of Vishnu, which has since been transferred to Patna Museum. In the working season of 1918-19, late H. Pandey, then Assistant Superintendent, Archæological Survey of India, Eastern Circle, Patna; excavated *Bhairo-ka-asthan* resulting in finds of two temples, built one above the other, in two distinct periods. Excavation was no doubt subjective. The later temple consisted of two shrines built side by side with walls 5 feet to 6 feet in width with bricks measuring 13″ × 8½″ × 2″. From one of these the Vishnu image, already referred to, was recovered, leaving no doubt about the purpose of this particular shrine. But the scope of the other could not be established. Amongst other finds may be mentioned three bronze images, one of which was a *Chauturmukha lingam* set in a *Yonipatta* of lotus pattern on the top of a *damaru* shaped pedestal. The second is also a phallus of Siva with a small pedestal, but bearing the figure of Ganesa on the rim and adorned on the outside with a trident, bull conchant and the figure of a devotee. The identity of the third was not possible to determine. Pandey was more fortunate in excavating the so-called 'Bhar mound' where seven blocks of buildings with evidence of five successive occupations of the site commencing from first century B. C. were unearthed. Punch marked coins, three copper pieces coated with silver, three coins of the Kushana dynasty, including one of Kanishka and eleven sealings were found during the excavations of the site. The destruction of the earlier temple at *Bhairo-ka-asthan*, took place possibly in the circumstances to be narrated below.

Anarchy and Saran.

Harsha left no heir. Arjuna succeeded him. Notwithstanding his two *prasastikaras*, Bana and Hiuen-Thsang, he failed to contribute any permanent feature in the political, economic, religious and cultural fields. His death in C. 648 A. D.* brought in an era of chaos, anarchy, suffering and frustration. What was more, for the first and last time, in the history of India, an Indian king and thousands of

* R. S. Tripathi—*History of Kanauj*, page 189, footnote.

Indians were carried away as prisoners to China. Hardy barbarians repeatedly issued from the mountain barrier on the north, defeated badly led demoralised Indian armies, sacked, burnt and looted the cities and villages. Its temples were overthrown and people condemned to unspeakable sufferings. Indian sources completely fail us. Only the invaders' reminiscenses, guide us. This is the Chinese writer *Ma-twan-lin*.

Arjuna.

The then Chinese emperor had sent an embassy under *Wang-hieuen-tse.** But before the mission could reach India, Harsha had breathed his last. By a palace revolution, Arjuna, one of his ministers, usurped the throne. For some unknown reasons not available in the Chinese records, Arjuna seems to have taken hostile attitude and refused to admit the mission. In the armed conflict that followed, the escort of the mission seems to have been worsted and *Wang hiuen-tse* escaped with his bare life to Tibet. The Chinese envoy secured support from the Tibetan king who had married a Chinese princess named *Weng Cheng*. This king we shall have occasion to discuss in the next paragraph. The confederate army descended on the plain of Champaran with one thousand armed Tibetans and 7,000 Nepalese cavalry. They occupied the city of *Too-po-ho-lo*. The identity of this city is a moot point. According to some it was Champaran, others make it Chapra; while V. A Smith identifies it with Tirhut.† Since the Chinese envoy easily escaped to Tibet the first battle must have taken place near the hills. Possibly they came through Bagaha pass. The city was populous. Three thousand men and women were put to the sword; and 10,000 were reported to have been drowned in the nearby river, which is probably Bagmati. Arjuna retreated possibly to Muzaffarpur or Saran and reorganised his forces.

The second battle was more disastrous. Arjuna not only lost it, but was taken prisoner, along with a large number of his army, all of whom were massacred. The victorious Sino-Tibetan army swept through the smiling plains of Mithila and Saran. In a still later battle they are reported to have taken 12,000 men and women as prisoners and 20,000 animals of different species. The Chinese records claim that in this whirlwind campaign, the invaders took 580 Indian towns; and when they returned at last, leaving rotting corpses, charred villages and cities, the devasted fields, demented women and orphan children; they took Arjuna as a captive to China. After their departure, a wild scramble by the effete princes of Northern India, such as Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa, later Guptas of Magadha, etc., took place, but none of them were able to prevent the successes of the foreign invaders. It was from this time that

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* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1837, page 69. Indian Antiquary, Vol. IX, page 20.

† *Early History of India* (4th edition), page 367.

the flourishing civilization in Tirhut. Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Saran went out in flames; and was gradually replaced by impenetrable jungle, met with in the nineteenth century A. D.

Tibetan Invasions.

The information about the Tibetan occupation of India finds mention by Sylvain Levi.* The Chinese punitive expedition had exhibited to the Tibetan monarch, the evident weakness of Indians and they were not slow to take advantage of it. Some time between 581 and 600 A. D. unknown to the world, a revolutionary change took place in Tibet. A rare genius like *Loun-tsanso-loung-tsan,* united the hilly tribes living in the inaccessible valleys of Tibet; and founded a powerful as well as united kingdom. His son, *Srong-btsan-sgampo,* was a great general and statesman. He pushed forward the frontiers in all directions. The late Sir M. A. Stein found ruins of Tibetan fortifications mixed up with documents in the deserts of Central Asia, testifying to the Tibetan expansion through the table-land of Pamir at the expense of the Chinese empire. He married a Chinese princess, conquered Nepal and then married a Nepalese princess too. For 200 years, Nepal remained a dependency of Tibet. In 1947—49, *Anagarika Govinda* and *Li Gotami* went to Tibet, and succeeded in tracing the magnificent capital of *Srong-btsan-sganpo,* art remains of which exhibited a high Indo-Tibetan culture complex. While the Chinese envoy was satisfied with Indian loot, prisoners and Arjuna, the Tibetan king who contributed only one thousand armed men, took advantage of the opportunity and annexed greater portion of North Bihar and Assam. He claims in his records that he became master of half of India.

K'i-li pa-pon (650—679 A. D.) a grandson succeeded *Srong-bstan-sgampo* (600—650 A. D.) He was able to maintain his hold over the Indian territories. His empire extended, according to Dr. H. C. Ray, up to Madhyadesa. *Khri-ldi-srong btsan* (816—838 A. D.) is alleged to have ruled over an area, from Mongolia to the Ganges. But the anti-Buddhist policy of *Glang-Darma* (838 A. D.) produced reaction and shattered the Tibetan empire.† From *Tang* annals we learn that in 703 A. D. China woke up from its slumber; and succeeded in regaining the lost territories. Nepal and India overthrew the Tibetan yoke. The Tibetan king perished while leading the punitive expedition against Nepal. Levi has shown that Nepal was re-conquered, but Indian provinces with Chinese aid possibly regained their independence. The earlier temple at Belwa was demolished in this period.‡

* *Le Nepal,* tome ii, pp. 146 ff and 173 ff.

† H. C Ray—*Dynastic History of Northern India,* Vol. I, page 193.

‡ For Chinese aid theory of Yasovarman of Kanauj, *Indian Culture,* Vol. XV; Dr. B. M. Barua Commemoration Volume.

Other invasions.

These were not all. A set of copper plate grants found at Ragholi, in Central Provinces, credits a chief of unknown Saila family with the killing of an unnamed Paundra (North Bengal) king. Then came the invasion of Yasovarman of Kanauj, followed by those of Lalitadiya and Jayapida of Kashmir, narrated by Kalhana Misra in his celebrated work *Rajatarangini*. It is difficult to evaluate in absence of definite evidence how far they affected Saran. The campaigns of ambitious kings of Northern India, destroyed the political equilibrium and anarchy prevailed. Lama Taranatha has left some accounts of Eastern India in this period. " In Orissa and Bengal and other five provinces of the east, each Kshattriya, Brahman and merchant constituted himself the king of his surroundings, but there was no king ruling in the country." This fact is repeated in several Pala records. The statesmanship still left in the people of Eastern India enabled them to put an end to the deteriorating situation. They elected a king, named Gopala, and assured a new era of progress, law and order. In this move they were eminently successful. The country was integrated, law and order established and trade thrived. Armies of Eastern India, like those of the Mauryan and Gupta times, again successfully exhibited their strength to subdue the North Eastern India, after long centuries of frustration, again dared successfully to take the lead for a united India.

Pala-Rashtrakuta-Gurjara struggle.

The origin of the Pala dynasty has already been discussed. The 'Rashtrakutas' were in all probability. descendants of some of the *Rathika* families, who were ruling over small tracts in the Canerese districts, Maharashtra and Vidarbha, as suggested by Dr. A. S. Altekar. Their home was probably in ancient Karnata. After consolidating their position in Deccan, they intervened in the affairs of the north. This was brought about by a conflict of interests in Central India and rising power of the 'Gurjara Pratiharas', a dynasty, possibly of foreign extraction and whose home was Bhillamala or Bhinmal in Jodhpur district. Chand Bardai calls them, however, *Agnikula*. The myth is absurd. They in fact belonged to the Gurjara' stock as we gather from references in Rashtrakuta records and Al Maasudi Rajasekhara, however, by a later fiction calls them *Raghu-kula-tilaka*. They are now represented by 'Parihars', a backward tribe. They gained prominence in constant wars with the *mlechchhas* or Arabs of Sindh. The real founder of their glories was Vatsaraja.

It was a tragedy indeed, that these three most powerful dynasties were destined to rise at one and the same time, thereby wasting their energies and the manpower of India in a fruitless struggle for supremacy. Palas were first to take the lead under Dharampala, who having occupied the whole of Bihar and Bengal, annexed *Antarvedi* (the Doab between the Ganges and Jamuna), or the ancient Panchala

country (modern Rohilkhand), and claims to have proceeded up to Kangra. In the Western Malwa, he seems to have clashed with the Gurjaras. Vatsaraja, the then Gurjara king, seems to have fought successfully with the Palas and then brought his own nemesis by clashing with Dhruva (780 A. D.–794 A. D.), the Rashtrakuta king. Dhruva came to punish Vatsaraja, who according to some Rashtrakuta records, had become " intoxicated with the goddess of the sovereignty of Gaur which he had acquired with ease " In this way throughout the successive reigns the struggle went on. There were also enemies at home to be suppressed, both in the Pala and Rashtrakuta dominions, and each succeeded or suffered eclipse by turns.

The Gurjara empire reached its zenith, in the reign of Bhojá and Mahendrapala who ruled over an area which extended from Karnal to North Bengal and Kathiawar to Bihar. Mahendrapala's records have been found at Guneri in Gaya district, Itkhori in Hazaribagh, Biharsharif and Nalanda in Patna district. Late R. D. Banerji found an *ex-voto* record at Paharpur in the Bogra district of Eastern Pakistan. Last, but not the least, the village of Dighwa-Dubauli in Saran has supplied a copper plate dated in V. S. 955 (898 A. D.) issued in the reign of Mahendrapaladeva.* It records the grant of land in *Sravasti bhukti,* thereby providing, if proof was necessary, that the Gurjara Pratihara empire extended up to Gandak if not further east, on the northern bank of the Ganges. *Bhukti* in ancient and mediaeval India denoted a fiscal division.† It follows, therefore, that Saran in the ninth century of the Christian era was a part of *Sravasti bhukti,* just as it is now a part of Tirhut Division. Mahendrapala died leaving probably at least two sons--Bhoja II and Mahipala, not to be confused with the monarch of the same name belonging to the rival house of the Palas. The chronology henceforth is obscure. Other kings are known in the Gurjara family such as Kshitipala. Vinayakpala and Herambapala. The exact position occupied by them in the dynastic genealogy is still not known. The decline set in from this period. The powerful feudatories refused subordination, acknowledging nominal suzerainty merely and coming to the help of the imperial family sometimes when in great distress.

The Last Phase.

Notwithstanding these reverses, Saran in all probability continued to be occupied by the Palas along with other areas of North Bihar. Because, a mound called Jowhri Dih, near the village of Imadpur, in Muzaffarpur district, yielded a bronze image dedicated in the 48th regnal year of Mahipala II, of the Pala dynasty.

The Chandellas of Jejakabhukti, in Bundelkhand, also seems to have raided Saran. The Khajuraho stone inscription of Dhanga

* *Indian Antiquary*. *Vol.* XV, pp. 105—13.

† *Journal of the Numismentic Society of India,* Vol XII, page 41 ff. and *Also Bihar Through the Ages,* pp. 53-54. The discussion is extremely uncritical.

dated in V. S. 1011 (C. 954 A. D.) tells us that he (Dhanga) cut down Gaudas,* carried off the treasures of the Kosalas, before whom perished the Kashmiri warriors, the Malavas, the Kurus and the Gurjaras. It is evident that the Yasovarman, the Chandella, extended his territories from Himalayas to Malwa and from Kashmir to Bengal.

Chedi Conquests.

A manuscript of *Ramayana* found in Nepal states in the Colophon that it was copied in V. S. 1076 (C. 1019 A. D.) when *Gaudadhvaja*, etc., Gangeyadeva were ruling over Tirabhukti.† Two gold coins of Gangeyadeva were found in the village of Dumarai, in police-station Masrakh. In all probability Gangeyadeva was a member of the Haihaya (or Kalachuri) dynasty of Tripuri. The only inscription of this king was found at Piwan a place 25 miles N. N. E. of Rewa. Al-Biruni, the famous Indo-Arabic scholar (1030 A. D.), mentions Dahala with its capital *Tiauri*, as one of the countries of India. The ruler was named *Gangeya.* Information about his reign is mainly derived from the inscription of his descendants. Thus the Goharwa land grant of his son and successor credits him with conquests of Kira (Kangra), Utkala (Orissa), Anga (Bhagalpur district with portions of Monghyr and Santhal Parganas, i.e., from Kiul river (minus the hill tracts of Jamui) including Kharagpur hills then known as *Hiranya parvata*, Monghyr (called Mudgagiri), up to Teliyagarhi; and Kuntala (Canarese districts). As pointed out by Dr. H. C. Ray, Baihaqui confirms the tradition that Gangeyadeva spent his days under the *Akshyavata* at Allahabad, i.e., the area up to Allahabad was his kingdom. Dr. Ray also drew our attention to the fact, that when Ahmed Niyaltingin, a general of the Yamini king Ma'asudi (C. 1030—1040 A. D.) invaded Varanasi, the city is alleged to have belonged to the territory of " Gang .†

By this time the empire of the Gurjara Pratiharas had become confined within Kanauj. The Chandellas had declined after the death of Vidyadhara. Therefore the claims made on behalf of Gangeyadeva by Chedi court poets can be accepted. The Kuntala king defeated by him was probably Vikramaditya V—Tribhuvanmalla (1009—1011 A. D.), the grand-son of Taila II.‡ The epilogue of Gangeya's reign is very sad. He suffered defeats at the hands of the Paramara Bhoja as stated in *Parijatamanjari.* Chandella Vijayapala too claims victory over him. That he had met with disastrous defeat is also evident from the inscriptions of his son. Gangeyadeva issued a remarkable series of gold, silver and copper coins, simple in design but extremely elegant. On the obverse, the legend containing king's name and on the reverse the nimbate figure of goddess Lakshmi,

* Inhabitants of Gaur.

† H. C. Ray—*Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. II, p. 773 and *Elliot*, Vol. II. page 123.

‡ *Ibid*, page 774.

seated cross-legged. The type was evidently derived from Imperial Gupta issues.*

Gangeya died in 1041 A. D., and was succeeded by Karna or Lakshmi-Karna, his mother being Dehatta. Traditions as well as epigraphic evidence makes Karna one of the greatest conquerors. A mediæval Indian Napoleon, Merutunga in his *Prabandhachintamani* and *Rasmala* by Forbes (Oxford, 1924) credits him with extensive conquests. The Tibetan tradition state that Karna overran Magadha (South Bihar) and destroyed many Buddhist *Viharas* (temples) and *aramas* (monasteries). The Bheraghat inscription of his grand-daughter-in-law records that he ruled over Pandeya (South India), Murala (Malabar), Kunga (Salem and Coimbatore), Vanga (now in East Pakistan), Kalinga (Ganjam) and Hunas. The last named probably occupied the hill tracts of the Punjab. The Karanbel inscription adds the names of Chola, Gaur and Gurjara. Some of these claims are confirmed by inscriptions of other dynasties. Thus the eastern conquests of Karna are proved by the records of the Palas and the Varmmans of Vikramapura. In this campaign Karna got one of his daughters, Yauvana-Sri, married to Vigrahapala III, while another, named Vira Sri, was married to Jatavarniman. The above discussions make it quite clear, that for a time at least, he ruled over the territory, extending from Benares and the Mahi river in the west to the delta of the Ganges in the east, and from the Ganges and Jamuna Valley up to the upper courses of Mahanadi, Wainganga, Wardha and Tapti.†

Sodhadeva.

A cultivator discovered a land grant in his field in the village of Kahla, in Gorakhpur district. In its prose portion we are informed that from his residence at Dhulinghatta, Sodhadeva, the son of *Maryadasagardeva* granted land to 14 Brahmins after bathing in Gandak on *Uttara Sankranti* day of V. S. 1134 (1077 A. D.)‡ The founder of the dynasty was an unnamed *Rajaputra* (prince). He probably ruled in the eighth century A. D. He is reported to have captured the lord of 'Vahali', defeated many kings of the east, and lowered the fame of the king 'Kirttin', etc. It is doubtful if he was ruling in Gorakhpur region. He was followed by Sivaraja and Sankaragana I. The last named prince was granted freedom from fear by Kokkalla (C. 860-900 A. D.). Gunambodhi, the next king received some land from Bhojadeva and stole the fortune of the Gurjaras. Ullabha, the next king was a nonentity and was succeeded by his brother Bhamana, who distinguished himself in war against Dhara. Then followed five rulers, Bhima, the last of whom was dethroned in V. S. 1037 (980

* R. D. Banerjee—*Prachina Mudra* (in Hindi), Kasi Nagari Pracharini Sabha.

† H. C. Ray—*op. cit.*, Vol. I, page 779.

‡ *Epigraphica India*, Vol. VII, pp. 85—93.

A. D.) when their headquarters were at 'Gokulaghatta' in favour of Vyasa *alias* Maryadasagara. His son was Sodhadeva.

Sodhadeva was described as the life of the bank of 'Sarayu', and he bathed in Gandak before making this grant. It is clear therefore that his dominions included Deoria Gorakhpur and Saran in Bihar. His titles indicate that taking advantage of the political chaos he had declared independence. From the effigy of the Bull on his seal, we may conclude that he was *Saiva.* Nothing else is known about him and about his successors. Probably the glories of this small feudal family was crushed by Govindrachandradeva of the Gahadavala dynasty (1114—1155 A. D.), one of whose inscriptions was discovered at Shahet-Mahet in Gonda district—ancient Sravasti dated in V. S. 1176 (1119—1120 A. D.), and a land grant of his was also found in the village of Don Buzurg, 7½ miles north of Mairwa railway station dated in 1176 V. S. All this show, that in this year of 1119-20 A. D., Govindachandra was pushing towards the east. Gorakhpur, Deoria and Saran were annexed to the last Kanauj empire

Plastic Activity.

The second temple at Belwa was probably erected at this time. It was a temple of Vishnu. Belwa was also a place of Buddhist worship, since seals bearing at the centre image of Buddha in the earth touching attitude with possibly the Buddhist creed stamped on the edges, now lost, were also found. Other places in Saran have also furnished evidences of a vigorous plastic activity between C. ninth century A. D. to twelfth century A. D.

Art is not merely the plastic expression of any particular idea. Rather it is the expression of the ideal which the artist can realise. Beauty is theoretical and abstract and it is merely the elementary basis of plastic activity. The village of Eksaran, in police-station Ekma, has supplied such material. The first of these images is of Vishnu-Trivikrama, but not damaged like that of Belwa. He is accompanied by Lakshmi and Sarasvati, along with his usual *ayudhas.* On the back slab are found miniature figures depicting different *avataras* of Vishnu. The second image also is of Vishnu-Trivikrama, but the black slab does not contain the figure of *avataras.* The third is a unique image of dancing Ganesa. Though lacking in spirited modelling and elasticity of design, nevertheless they are charming products, furnishing objective evidence of the decline of the Eastern Indian School of Mediæval Sculptures towards the end of the twelfth century A. D. The free fantasia of design was lost and linear rhythm instead of flowing is stiff. The motifs and companion figures stand out from the background lifeless and inert without movements. All indicating that the free impulse to create had been throttled by canon and the plastic activity had become stereotyped. Instead of an art it had become a craft of image-making. A work of art always surprises us; it works its effect before we become conscious of its presence.

What we expect in a work of art, is the artist to reveal something to us that is original and transcendental. Art in the highest calls for high objective depiction for the expression of the subjective states of mind and emotion; and for the recognition of the transcendental all enfolding life of the cosmos. When these elements are nobly and generously present in the subdivisions and inter relations of the sculpture or painting they touch the sensitive observers with the æsthetical sanctification that only the highest art can communicate. Sometimes the exquisite austerity may tend to obscure the personal element of the artist in the calm depiction of super personality. Nevertheless, humanity in the form, will give free rein to the joy of the artist so that the æsthetic will not be cold but patent and pulsating. Sometimes they conceived and designed in colossal size; the form's graceful pose, refined expression, along with balance and poise in repose, at once captivate the mind and capture the gaze. The pose, with a slight swing on the waist line, found in many images, is suggestive of lively movement, in a figure which in its origin and conception was bound to be earthbound. The chiaroscuro have often been carefully marked and the life-like effect obtained by an accentuation of the outline. Occasionally the artist delineated the figure with extraordinary skill, not only as regards form and high level of artistic skill; but also as regards life-like effect and inner expression. In these specimens found at Saran, none of these qualities are met with, indicating the conclusion suggested above. Because, there is a true relation between the artist and the contemporary culture, which is one of the problems that so much concerns us today. The period and the civilization, endow the form, and even dictate the content of a work of art; but the power that integrates forms and raises them to the scale of art is determined by the individual genius of the artist.

Late Mediæval Period.

Advent of the Turks.

In the year 1193 A. D., Hindu and Buddhist Turkish population of Afganisthan converted to Islam, succeeded in securing a wedge to enter the ancient Kuru-Panchala country. Islam had been hammering at the gates of India since seventh century A. D., when Muhammad Ibn-al-Kasim won a bridgehead in Sindh, after more than two hundred years of effort by the Caliphate. Beyond Multan and Jaiselmere. however, they could not proceed. The inscriptions of the Gurjara Pratiharas, Rashtrakutas and the Paramaras. as well as statements of Ma'asudi testify to many indecisive actions. But after the two battles of Taraon or Tirauri, the situation changed. It was not merely crashing the gate, but a disastrous calamity. At first, Bihar was not involved but after the fateful battle of Chandawar in 1195 A. D., when the aged Gahadvala (Vulgo Gharwar) monarch, Jayachandra lost the battle after thrashing the Turco-Afgan army almost to the point of defeat, all chances of an independent India

were lost. Even then a correct analysis established that, neither the Sultan of Ghor nor Qutb-ud-din Aibak dared to press their advantage; but had to remain contended by making Ganga near Varanasi their frontier and endeavouring to consolidate their gains in the Jamuna Valley and the Upper Ganges Valley where, Prince Harishchandra, the son and heir to the Gahadavala throne, carried on resistance from the jungles of Jaunpur and Machchlisahar. No historian has cared to emphasise the point that South Bihar and portions of West and North Bengal were conquered by private enterprise, without any armed, economic or active support from Sultan of Ghor or his Viceroy at Delhi

Recently, uncritical attempts have been made to explain that "Bihar must have felt the weight of Muslim armies and also the zeal of Muslim missionaries long before its conquests by Muhammad Ibn Bakhtyar Khalji".* There could not have been a greater mis-statement of facts. *Turushkadanda,* mentioned in the Maner plates of Govindachandra, grandfather of Jayachandra, is not peculiar to the record or the area itself. It was a kind of tax which has been repeatedly mentioned along with many others, from which a village granted to a Brahmin was exempt, according to the ancient usages of this country. This was the custom in ancient and mediæval India in making land grants. That is why, these are such a valuable source to the historian of India, because, they throw a flood of light on the fiscal, economic and official organisations of the age. Govindachandra's land grants have been found in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and at Chhatarpur in Central Provinces. In majority of these *Turushkadanda* is mentioned. It was possibly a special levy to maintain an organisation to check Muslim raids from East Punjab.

The catholicity and emotional sense of chivalry undoubtedly led the Hindus to show great latitude to Muslim spies and travellers, like Sulaiman and Ma'asudi. This is not true of Bihar only. Because Ma'asudi tells us that, 'Balharas', that is, the Rashtrakutas of Deccan were great friends of Islam.† Therefore, while we cannot completely rule out the possibility of individual Muslim *Fakirs* settling in Hindu territories, due to their enlightened despotism; large colonies were out of the question. Tarnath's *story*, because it has never been accepted as balanced history, since it is a compilation of legends, folk traditions and myths; has been wrongly interpreted. Last but not the least, the term *Turushka* does not mean a Muslim, since before the mass conversion of Hindu and Buddhist Turks in Afganisthan and Baluchisthan, all these were non-Muslims. *Udichipati Tikina,* mentioned in the Nalanda inscription of Malada, was a Buddhist Turk. *Tikina* is the Sanskritized form of Turkish *Tegin*; such as Alaptegin, Sabuktegin, etc. Genghiz Khan, the world conquerer, was a Buddhist.

* *Current Affairs,* page 6.

† Elliot—*History of India,* Vol. I, page 4.

Shamanism even now exists in Siberia. The Hindu Turks took service under Kashmir kings and are referred to in Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*. The story, that on entering Nadia, Mahammad Ibn Bakhtyar Khaliji and his companions, were mistaken for horse dealers from Northern India, lends colour to the view, that the people of Southern Bengal were well acquainted with the horse dealers from the North. Tradition can only be accepted as materials of scientific history, when it is confirmed by more reliable evidence.

Lastly, Bihar has always been an extensive land, marvellously adapted for defence and war of attrition, with great economic potential. Its rich fertile soil, large navigable rivers, primeval forests, its populous and wealthy cities and villages, have always attracted invaders. In evaluating its proper historical contributions, not merely tradition and *malfuzes* have to be drawn upon, but, it's physical features, possibilities and facts have to be impartially analysed. It is a historical inexactitude, to state that millions of Bihar's inhabitants tamely submitted to the fanatical zeal of Islam. The Rohtas Valley remained in Hindu hands till the sixteenth century A. D. This has been admitted by Abbas Sherwani. The whole of Chotanagpur Division was never conquered by Islam, even in the great days of the Mughals. The Khetauris of Santhal Parganas and hill tracts of South Monghyr, like Kharagpur, were free people. Kharagpur was conquered and the boy king converted to Islam in the reign of Jahangir. In the fifteenth century A. D. Bhairavendra of Umga hills, in the Aurangabad subdivision of the Gaya district, was an independent prince. If that were the conditions in South Bihar, what about North Bihar in general and Saran in particular? This digression was necessary, to emphasise the magnitude of our ignorance, due to lack of intensive researches in local history, to fill up the hiatuses. A proper balance-sheet showing Bihar's sufferings and sacrifices, the successful resistance of the Bihari people to Muslim encroachments is lacking. Even when, major portions of South Bihar had been overrun, Saran, Muzaffarpur, Champaran, Saharsa, Purnea and Darbhanga were comparatively independent.*

Early Muslim Rule in Saran.

The real history of Muslim rule in Saran, is very imperfectly known like that of its neighbouring districts. The lost history of these jungle tracts, was, however, not less glorious than that of ancient Kosala. The sources of information are indeed scanty and scattered. Nevertheless, if any picture has taken definite shape it is that, two definite facts emerge from the chaos, rabble and shambles of centuries. First, it was never conquered by the Muslims till the fifteenth century of the Christian era. Lacking any central organisations, leaders to lead them, resistance was led by small feudal lords

* Mithila was not conquered by Bakhtyar. The evidence of a late work like *Riyaz-us-Salatin* cannot be accepted for the period.

of previous regimes from their mud-walled *garhs*. The Turco-Afghans had to lead repeated expeditions, to subdue them. On arrival of the well-equipped armies, the neighbourhood submitted tamely and paid tribute; but as soon as their back was turned, they assumed independence and the promised tribute was never paid. Muslim shrines were established at Bedivan in Champaran. The Tughluqs established a mint town at Tughluqpur in Darbhanga. Simraon with its seven walls and moats went out in flames. The princes of Mithila were repeatedly attacked. But all these were temporary gains, the Muslims gained no permanent advantage out of them. But even these small references are absent about Saran. The second stage starts in the fifteenth century, when a new policy was enunciated by Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah (1493—1519 A. D.), who started establishing small Muslim military outposts to colonise these tracts, and to keep Hindus in check. This will be discussed later.

To evaluate the evidence, it is necessary to appreciate the connotation of the term 'Tirhut'. Tirhut is the vulgarised form of the ancient name 'Tirabhukti' found on many seals inscriptions and manuscripts. Whenever invasions of any part of North Bihar have to be referred, Persian annalists consistently used the term 'Tirhut' while ancient Magadha was denoted by 'Bihar'.

Exactly when Turkish troops crossed the Ganges to carry fire and sword in the eastern part of the ancient Kosala country, cannot be determined with any certainty. Since, however, it was merely the matter of crossing the Ganga, we shall not be far from the truth in assuming that sporadic raids of the villages in the neighbourhood of Ganga were carried on sometimes as a matter of State policy and sometimes on individual initiative for loot and women. The crusaders of Islam in Eastern India lacked both Mulla Taqui's statement about invasion of Tirhut, confirmed by sixteenth century texts, have to be accepted with great caution. The libraries of Gaur had undergone great deal of devastations by that time. e.g., the looting by Arsalam Khan. Even the earliest Muslim historiographer, Minhaj-ud-din Siraj has committed innumerable mistakes. Thus he says Lakhnawati was made the capital, but when it was captured by the Muslims he has not specified As pointed out by late R. D. Banerji, *Tabakat-i-Akbari*, *Muntakh'bt-ut-Twarikh* are not very dependable for this period and *Feristha* is full of legends and fictions. Ali Mardan Khalji is reported to have occupied 'Narayankoe', which is probably abbreviation or scribes' error for 'Narayanpur *ab-i-kos*' or Kosi that is Narayanpur on the river Kosi, to be identified with Jalalgarh in Purnea district, as first pointed out by Dr. K. R. Qanungo. It was in the neighbourhood of Gaur or Lakhnawati, and was the limit on the north-west of the Muslim kingdom in Bengal

It was not till the reign of Sultan Ghyas-ud-din Iwaz (1211—1226 A. D.), that Tirhut agreed to pay tribute. Iltutmish (1210—1235 A. D.) placed Bihar under Ala-ud-din Masud Jani in 622 H., but the

area represented by modern Saran district was possibly not included in the new viceroyalty. It was, therefore, no small credit on the part of the petty zamindars of Saran to remain independent, when all the principal and most renowned Rajput dynasties of mediæval India, had succumbed to the zeal and fanaticism of Turco-Afghans. The Paramaras, the Chauahanas, the Chandellas, the Haihayas, the Gahadavalas, the Senas had ceased to exist; but the indigent descendants of ancient Kosalas, notwithstanding desecration and massacre kept the flag flying. That history of Saran and its adjoining jungle tracts has never been investigated, far less told.

Balbans and Saran.

In 1282 A. D., Bughra Khan was made Governor of Bengal, by Ghyas-ud-din Balban (1265—1287 A. D.), Sultan of Delhi. On his death in 1282 A. D., the Turco-Afghan *amirs,* placed Muiz-ud-din Kaikobad, son of Bughra Khan, on the throne of Delhi. Bughra Khan declared his independence at Lakhnawati, assuming the name of Nasir-ud-din Mohammad-Bughra Shah (1282—1291 A. D.), Kaikobad soon fell in evil company: and commenced murdering the loyal servants of his grandfather. Bughra Khan appreciating that the knell of Balban empire had been sounded started for Delhi. The father and son seem to have met on the banks of Sarayu (*sic.* Ghogra). The exact place of the meeting cannot be determined. Revelganj in Saran was once situated on the junction of Gogra and Ganges. Its commercial importance decayed when the junction shifted towards the east. There is another junction near Turtipar in Ballia district. Therefore, for lack of details, it is not possible to identify the place of meeting of the son and the father. But the *Ain-i-Akbari* definitely says that it was in Oudh The meeting was successful, even if it failed to contribute permanent results. Nasir-ud-din was recognised as the independent king of Bengal, while his son became Sultan of Delhi.* According to *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi,* Firoz Shah (1351—1388 A. D.) started from Delhi to fight Shamsu-ud-din Ilyas Shah of Bengal (1339—1358 A. D.). Instead of following the southern route he is reported to have marched by the northern bank of the Ganges and reached the environs of Gorakhpur. It is alleged that the Hindu *Rajas* of this area had not paid their tribute regularly. But the arrival of the imperial army in the neighbourhood of Gorakhpur and Kharosa they came to pay tribute, undertaking to be of good behaviour in future. The detailed account of the campaign is available but no part of Saran is mentioned. Since, however, he could not have reached the confluence of the Kosi and the Ganges, wherever it was in the fourteenth century, without passing Saran we may assume that, it was annexed to the Tughluq empire. Before that Shams-ud-din Ilyas also seems to have occupied Saran. Because a later work *Tabakat-i-Akbari* states, that Ilyas

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* Ghyas-ud-din Tughluq did not in all probability conquer Saran.

extended his dominions up to Varanasi. Hajipur on the other side of the Ganges and Samastipur were supposed to have been founded by him. A Newari inscription discussed by Dr. Jayaswal mentions an invasion of Nepal by *Suratrana Shamsdina.** All these clearly demonstrate that North Bihar had become a buffer State between Bengal and Delhi Sultanates. Firoz had to march again in 259 H., *via* Gorakhpur-Chakait to rout Sikhandar Shah (1388-89 A. D.), the son and successor, of Ilyas Shah, which confirms the above hypothesis. It is, therefore, difficult to agree with the view that Tughluq sovereignty extended over whole of North and South Bihar as well. It was superficial. This is also true of the area now designated as ' Saran '.

Saran and later Afghans.

Mahmud Tughluq (1394—1396 and 1399--1413 A. D.) had sent Khawaja Jehan, entitled *Malik-us-Sharq* (the lord of the east), to rule over Oudh, Prayag and Rohilkhand in 1393-94 A. D. The charge was more important than that of the other Viceroys. Because, actually he was the Indian proto-type of the Garoligian *Marechals* of the frontier. He extended his authority as far west as Koil (Aligarh), and on the east up to Tirhut in Bihar. There was no question about the success of his policy. The suffering of the countryside and its people was not a matter of sufficient importance before the greed of the Turco-Afghan overlord was satisfied. Most of these wars were not carried out by the *vizir* himself, but by his adopted son, Karanful. Sitting in the palace of Vijayachandra, the father of Jayachandra, at Zafarabad near Jaunpur, the stern old Afghan Vizir's heart probably swelled at the success of his adopted son who carried fire and sword through the jungles of Gorakhpur, Saran, Muzaflarpur, Darbhanga, Purnea, Saharsa, etc. Khawaja Jehan died in 1399 A. D., after declaring his independence and was succeeded by Karanful, who assumed the royal name of Mubarak Shah (1399—1402 A. D.). He died on march, in 1402 A. D.; and was succeeded by his younger brother, Shamsu-ud-din Ibrahim Shah (1402--1436 A. D.).

The situation had changed. Raja Ganesa had seized the throne of Bengal, the accounts of the activities of the Raja Ganesa are only available from the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, a work of his enemies, as observed by Blochmann and R. D. Banerji. It is hardly fair to blame them, if their writings did not breathe the spirit of a Thucydides.† After 1193, this is a great disadvantage for those who had the patriotism and courage to oppose aggressive Islam, particularly those Indians, who endeavoured to stop Islamisation of Eastern India. At the request of Nur-qutb-ul-Alam, Ibrahim Shah Sharqi is supposed to have invaded Bengal. Both *Feristha* and Badaoni are silent about his Bengal

* *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, 1936, Vol. XXII p. 51 ff.

† *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* Vol. XIII, 1873, part I. page 264, R D. Banerji—*History of Bengal*, Vol. II, page 165

expedition. By which route he proceeded is also not actually known. Tirhut might have unsuccessfully opposed him as mentioned in *Purushapariksha* of Vidyapati, but about Saran we have no evidence.

It is not until 1493 A. D., that we again receive any information about Saran. By that time, the glories of the Sharqis of Jaunpur had become one with Nineveh and Tyre. Bahlul Lodi had succeeded in replacing the bankrupt energies of the Tughluqs; and Hussain Sharqi (1458—1479 A. D.) the last independent king of Jaunpur was living as a refugee in Bihar. The period is confused but we have some information. We see a new spirit, colonization of unemployed Muslim to act as a check to the unconquerable spirit of Hindu zamindars. It included both the northern and southern banks of Ganga. The ruins of mosques, tombs, monasteries throughout Saran, mounds representing the ruins of the earlier civilisation, testify to the attitude of the Lodis and Alla-ud-din Hussain Shah of Bengal.

During this period the only important item is an alleged raid of Orissa by Hussain Sharqi. He also sent Mubarak Khan, son of Tatar Khan, Governor of Sambhal, as state prisoner to Saran in 1478 A. D.; but as already mentioned he was defeated by Lodi troops and Jaunpur occupied in 1484 A. D. Leaving his son Barbak Shah as ruler of Jaunpur; Bahlul returned to Delhi to die in 1488 A. D., and was succeeded by Sikandar Lodi (1488—1517 A. D.). It was Sikandar Lodi who placed Jaunpur under Jamal Khan Sarangkhani, the patron of Sher Khan. Hussain's vain desire to regain his patrimony, brought Sikandar Lodi to Bihar in 1494 A. D. The Sharqi king, unable to resist, retreated to Kahalgaon and died there.

In the meantime, a revolution had taken place in Bengal, by which Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah (1493—1519 A. D.) had ascended the Afghan throne of Bengal. The final spots of his inscriptions establish the wide extent of his kingdom. These are Malda, Kheraul, Babar, Suti and Shaikherdighi in Murshidabad; Dacca; Munghyr Shah Nafa's Mosque; Gaur; Ismailpur, Narhan and Cherand in Saran; Bonhara in Patna; Tribeni in Hooghly; Pandua; Sonargaon; Sylhet in Assam; Tiperah; Birbhum; Chakdah in Nadia. Amongst these the epigraphs found at Ismailpur, Cherand and two other at Narhan, still not edited are relevant for our purpose, proving that Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah's conquests included Saran. According to Ismailpur inscription in 906 H. (March, 1501 A. D.) the mosque had been erected at this village by one nobleman entitled "*Majlis us-Majalis*". The Cherand inscription informs us that in 909 H. (1503-04 A. D.), Ala-ud-din had erected a Jami Maszid at this place.* These two inscriptions are of extreme significance for the history of North Bihar during early Muslim rule and not merely of Saran. In the first place they prove that 'Tirhut' in Muslim history does not stand for merely the modern district of Tirhut but whole of the present Tirhut Division, that is,

* *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1874, part I, page 340, note.

the whole of North Bihar. Secondly, they further prove that colonisation of the jungle tracts of ancient Kosala country was initiated by Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah of Bengal to keep the recalcitrant Hindu *Rajas* in check. Neither Khaj Malik's of Lakhnawati, Balban's of Bengal, nor Tughluqs, Syyeds of Delhi or Illyas Shahi kings had been able to conquer North Bihar completely or to subjugate it. But building of mosques, etc., indicate unmistakably, that religious edifices were being erected, at the cost of the Hindus, to meet the spiritual needs of the new Muslim population in Saran. Muslim divines and militia men were being settled there. This policy of colonization was carried to its logical end by the Lodis. On the advent of the Mughals, the Afghans in Bihar and Bengal, played the same role *vis-a-vis* their conquerors as did the Hindu zamindars during the first and last stages of Muslim occupation of Bihar.

It is, therefore, clear that, on the eve of Lodi conquest of Bihar, the Bengal Sultans practically ruled over the whole of North Bihar up to Saran district and South Bihar up to Patna. The remaining portion from Ganga near Banaras up to Shahabad was the 'Refuge' of Ibrahim Sharqi in the days of his misfortune. Merely names and numbers of villages are not sufficient evidence in historical methodology.

After the flight of Ibrahim, Sikandar Lodi seems to have proceeded to North Bihar; on successful termination of which campaign, the Lodi Sultan, decided to test his powers with that of the Bengal kingdom in 1495 A. D. The subsequent story is supplied by Al Badaoni. *Shahzada* Daniel, who is reported to have built the fort of Munghyr was sent in command of the Bengal army by Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah. But Sikandar Lodi did not dare to clash with the powerful Bengal army and concluded a mutual non-aggression pact. It was at this time that a great famine occurred in Bihar. The Lodi emperor having made his eastern frontier safe, concentrated his attention on the helpless inhabitants of Saran, Champaran, etc., by plundering and confiscating the estates of Hindu zamindars and assigning them to his fellow Muslims. He gave Saran and Champaran as *jalkhet* to Hussain Khan Formuli. Some of the Persian historians designate him as 'Naib of Saran'. He was one of the sons of Shaikh Syyed Formuli and had attached himself to the Lodi emperor. Two Persian annals: *Tarikh-i-Daudi* and *Tarikh-i-Shahi* have recorded the feats of this Afghan military adventurer, in inflicting arson and loot on the people of Saran, in the service Sikandar. Rizquillah Mushtaki tells us that he had taken many thousands of villages in Saran, from the Hindus, besides those comprising his *jaigir*; and killed an unknown 'Raja of Champaran', by which he obtained a great deal of booty and huge amount of gold.*

* Rizquillah supplies proof that Saran was not completely conquered neither by early Sultanates of Delhi nor by the Sharqi kings of Jaunpur.

Nemesis, however, soon overtook Hussain Formuli. The growth of his power and prestige, and amassing a fabulous wealth at the expense of the peace loving Hindus of North Bihar roused the just suspicion of his Turco-Afghan sovereign liege lord. According to Nizam-ud-din and *Feristha,* Hazi Saraung was sent at the head of a contingent of imperial troops in 1509 A. D., to Saran, to win over the Naib's men and if necessary to seize him. The gallant Hussain Formuli who had been a terror to the ill-equipped and badly led inhabitants of Champaran and Saran now fled in terror to the court of Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah for sanctuary. He probably encouraged the annexation of the territory up to Patna and Saran by the Bengal Sultan, as is suggested by Rizquilla. But Nasrat Shah, a son and successor of Ala-ud-din Hussain Shah, had to lead a fresh expedition to Tirhut.

On the death of Sikandar, matters, however, took a different turn. Hussain Formuli is reported to have returned to Ibrahim Lodi, son and successor of Sikandar. But Hussain realised his mistake when Miyan Makhan was placed in supreme command and Hussain was made a subordinate commander under him, in the expedition against Rana Sanga of Mewar with instructions to dispose of Formuli. Frustrated, Hussain seems to have vented his anger on unfortunate Makhan and left him in the lurch before Toda, to be easily defeated by Rana Sanga, who was not like the innocent zamindars of Saran. But he seems to have changed his attitude before all was lost, and made a treacherous attack on the victorious Rajput troops and succeeded due to the element of surprise. The gratified emperor offered him two alternative *jagirs,* either Saran or Chanderi. It was at Chanderi that he was killed.

In the meantime singular events overwhelmed Saran. The Sultans of Bengal did not remain passive observers when Ibrahim was striking death blows to the empire of the Lodis and eastern Afghans had decided to revolt to establish the Nuhani kingdom of Bihar under Darya Khan Nuhani. Nasir-ud-din Nasrat Shah (1519—1532 A. D.) had ascended the throne of Bengal. Unlike other Turco-Afghan rulers, instead of murdering his other brothers, he provided for them properly. Two brothers-in-law of his (sons-in-law of Ala-ud-din) named Makdum Alam and Ala-ud-din led the army to Tirhut or North Bihar, which they overran easily, because the Muslim colonists like Kabul Muhammad Khan were not strong enough to resist the Bengal army. The Bengal commanders reached up to Azamgarh, i.e., they conquered the whole of eastern Kosala. In 1526 A. D., at the historic battle field of Panipath, Jaharuddin Muhammad Babar, a Barlas Turk, descendant on father's side from Timur the lame and on mother's side from Chagatai, a son of Gengiz Khan, defeated and killed Ibrahim Lodi. Flying before the Mughal army, many psuedo Turco-Afghan war lords settled in Bihar, under the protection of the Bengal Sultan. Later they elected Muhammad Lodi, brother of Ibrahim Lodi as their emperor and decided to make a

fresh stand for the recovery of Delhi and Northern India. Nasrat Shah also sent Qutb Khan, a commander of his up to Bharaich, marching along the northern bank of Ganges, while Muhammad Lodi proceeded along the southern bank towards Chunar; when Babar had reached Jaunpur. Qutb Khan is reported to have fought many indecisive actions with the Mughal army and Babar. His ultimate fate is unknown. But Babar invaded South Bihar and the army of Muhammad Lodi melted away. Babar was now free to pay attention to Saran and neighbouring districts.

Nasrat Shah, thanks to Makhdum Alam and Ala-ud-din had extended his sway up to Azamgarh. The evidence is furnished by an inscription found at Sikandarpur on the Gogra. It records that on the 27th Rajab, 933 H. (28th April, 1527 A. D.) *sarlashkar* of 'Kharid', Ulugh Khan, erected a mosque there. It was this 'Kharid' area, that is the land on both banks of the Ganges in Balliya, Azamgarh and Saran, that brought about the first test of arms between Babar and the Bengal army. It was at Arrah, that Babar heard about the massing of the Bengali troops in 'Kharid'. They were supposed to have encamped near the junction of Ganga and the Ghagra. Babar regarded this as a hostile demonstration on the part of the King of Bengal, with whom he was at peace; and insisted on the withdrawal of the army and naval contingents from Bengal The warning was disregarded, and Babar made simultaneous attack on the enemy with six different detachments, crossing the Ganges on the south from Shahabad and the Gogra on the north from Saran. The Afghans were completely discomfited by these pincer movements and dislodged from their position. The attack made by the Bengal fleet and army were also successfully repulsed. In his autobiography, fortunately for us, Babar has left a graphic account of the land and river battles, and specially the struggle on the Ghagra. "The Bengalees are famous for their skill in artillery", says Babar, "and on this occasion we had a good opportunity of observing them: but they do not direct their fire against particular points, but discharge at random". The day after the battle, Babar reached the village called 'Gundneh , in the 'Purgunnah' of Narhan to the north of the Saru" (Gogra), possibly the present village of Guthni near the river bank. Here he received Shah Muhammad Maruf, on whom he bestowed the country of Saran. After staying for some time in Saran Babar marched to a village called 'Choupareh' which evidently is the present city of 'Chapra'.

At Chapra, a tropical thunder-storm, which even now breaks over Saran in all its fury, overtook Babar, an inhabitant of the high lands of Samarkand, a dessicated territory. He has left an interesting account of his experiences which took place on 26th May. "The clouds of the rainy season broke, and there was suddenly such a tempest, and the wind rose so high, that most of the tents were blown down. I was writing in the middle of my pavilion, and so suddenly did the

storm come on, that I had no time to gather up my papers and the loose sheets that were written, before it blew down the pavilion, with the screen that surrounded it, on my head. The top of the pavilion was blown to pieces but God preserved me. I suffered no injury. The books and sheets of paper were drenched and wet, but were gathered again with much trouble, folded in woollen cloth, and placed under a bed, over which carpets were thrown. The storm abated in two *gharis*. We contrived to get up the *toshak-khana* tent, lighted a candle with much difficulty, kindled a fire, and did not sleep till morning, being busily employed all the while in drying the leaves and papers".

At Maner, Babar seems to have entered into a treaty with Nasrat Shah. In 1532 Nasrat Shah was murdered and was succeeded by his boy son Ala-ud-din Firoz Shah who was murdered by his uncle Ghyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah (1532—1538 A. D.). On hearing of his accession Makhdum Alam revolted in Hajipur. Qutb Khan *Sarlashkar* of Monghyr, was sent against him, who was defeated and killed in a battle by Sher Khan. Makhdum Alam then tried to conquer Bengal but died in action, leaving all his wealth in the custody of Sher Khan who was then Deputy Governor of Bihar for Jalal Khan Lohani. It was Sher Shah who for the first time united North Bihar with South Bihar and created a new province of Bihar. On the death of Sher Shah in 1545 A. D., Islam Shah (1543—1553 A. D.) appointed Muhammad Khan Sur as his Viceroy of North Bihar and Gaur. On the murder of Firoz Shah (1553 A. D.), the son and successor of Islam Shah, three days after his accession, Muhammad Khan Sur declared his independence and assumed the name of Shams-ud-din Muhammad Shah (1553—1555 A. D.), who was defeated and killed by Himu in the battle of Chapra-Mau in 1555 A. D. On his death the peers of Bengal retreated to Jhusi, near Allahabad and elected Khijir Khan, son of Shams-ud-din as an independent king of Bengal and North Bihar with the name of Ghyas-ud-din Bahadur Shah (1555—1560 A. D.). On his death he was succeeded by his brother Ghyas-ud-din Jalal Shah (1560—1565 A. D.).

By 1565 A. D. Taj Khan Karrani having conquered Bengal, Sulaiman Karrani became the undisputed master of Bengal, North and South Bihar. It was he who removed the capital from Gaur to Tanda near Rajmahal. In 1567 A. D., Sulaiman accepted Akbar as his sovereign. In 1572-73 A. D. he died and was succeeded by his son Bayazid, who was soon put to death. The murderer met with similar fate at the hands of Daud Khan another son of Sulaiman. Daud was the last independent Turco-Afghan Sultan of Bengal (1572—1576 A. D.). Before we start with the events leading to the conquest of Eastern India by Akbar the Great, it is necessary to sum up the achievements and failures of the Turco-Afghans in Bihar.

A seemingly endless procession of alien rulers, belonging to a fanatical creed, administered an area whose contributions in the past

had indeed been great. Their history is stained with arson, revolutions and internecine warfare. The condition of the masses is not known to us but can easily be imagined. At shorter intervals, we have strong rulers, who brought peace undoubtedly but were the worst tyrants. The people were smothered in the iron grip of Afghan feudalism; to whom the country side was parcelled out. Art and architecture were based upon the genius of the forcibly converted Indians. Gradually, with fresh infiltrations and absorptions, provincial types appear in place of makeshift arrangements, erected with the demolished heathen *disjecta* and utilised by uncomprehending masons. Two definite styles were revolved in Bihar and Bengal, the early Bengal style and the Sur architectural style.

The Turco-Afghans had carried the crescent to the furthest limits in the east, by beginning of the sixteenth century of the Christian era. But by that time they had also exhausted themselves in India. The luxury of living and wealth had played their influence on the sons of the hardy mountaineers. The dawn of sixteenth century found a position, which has been met with, in so many regions of the world in different centuries. Nature demanded infiltration of new blood or stagnation and degradation to the lowest level. India in the sixteenth century had become a vast crucible of redundant and mediocre dynasties and races lacking leadership, insight and humanity. Panipath was their Taraon.

Mughal Period.

It was at this time that Raja Todarmall was despatched by Akbar (1574 A. D.) to conquer Bengal. A commander of Daud named Nizam was defeated at the confluence of Ganga and Gogra in the neighbourhood of the place where Babar had defeated Nasrat Shah. In this year, Jalal-ud-din Akbar passed Saran and Chapra by boat *en route* from Agra and encamped near Patna, founded by Sher Shah. On the 12th April 1575, Daud finally surrendered to the Mughals at Cuttack and Afghan sovereignty over Bengal ended.

It was in the reign of Akbar that the great land revenue settlement of the whole empire took place under the direction of Raja Todarmall. This settlement forms the basic foundation of our present system. It was called *Asl-i-Jama-i-Tumar* which superseded the assessment of Muzaffar Khan Turbati in the eleventh year of Akbar's reign. The third book of *Ain-i-Akbari* contains a comprehensive account of the same. He made Saran into a *Sarkar* containing 11 *mahals*, 10 villages and 2,29,052 *bighas* and 15 bissas of land yielding a revenue of 60,172,004½ *dams.** It supplied to the imperial army 1,000 cavalry and 50,000 infantry. The various *mahals* were: Indar, Barari, Narhan, Pachlakh, Chanend, Chaubera, Juwanah, Degsi, Sipah, Pal, Bara, Godha, Kaliyanpur, Kashmir, Mangjhi (sic Manjhi), Mandhal and Maker.

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* Contemporary currency.

Akbar, however, had not yet seen the last of Bengal affairs. On the death of Khan Jahan on December, 1578, Muzaffar Khan Turbati was appointed as Governor of Bengal. In 1580, the great military revolt in Bengal started. The leaders were Wazir Jamal, Baba Khan Kakshal, Masum Khan Kabuli-Asi (the rebel), Masum Khan Farankhudi, etc. The causes of the rebellion were various. The Imperial Court had issued instructions to the officials in Bihar and Bengal to enforce the unpopular regulations concerning the branding of horses for Government service and to secure the rights of the crown by investigating into the titles of *jagir* lands and resume disproved holdings. The Imperial Finance Minister, Khwaja Shah Mansur though an expert in financial matters was very severe and lacked elasticity. All this resulted in producing violent discontent amongst the Muslim nobles, who were generally Afghans and recently established Mughal feoffees in a country in which the Mughal rule had yet to be consolidated. Special cases of severity to individuals increased the tension, while an uncalled for interference by cutting down the local allowances by Mansur sanctioned by the emperor added fuel to the fire. Akbar had directed that the pay of men serving in Bengal should be increased by 100 per cent, and those serving in Bihar by 50 per cent. Mansur the 'Mughal Inchcape' ordered that those allowances should be cut down to 50 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively, and refund of excess payments were also demanded. In addition to all these, the orthodox Muslims of Bihar and Bengal were alarmed by the change in the religious policy of Akbar. The declaration of *Ilahi* was undoubtedly an alienation from Islam. Many of the officers in Bengal and Bihar looked to Muhammad Hakim as the head of the Indian Muslims. Early in 1580, Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, a theologian and Qazi of Jaunpur, issued a *Fatwa* that rebellion against the innovating emperor was lawful. In fact it was a declaration of *jihad* against the emperor. Masum Khan Kabuli who was in communication with Mirza Muhammad Hakim was a *jagirdar* of Patna and the ablest among the leaders.

Saran did not escape this turmoil. Shaham Khan Jalair, a Chaghtai, was stationed at Narhan. He was the son of Baba Beg, who had been a Governor of Humayun at Jaunpur. He took part in the battle of Chaunsa. While Humayun fled to Agra, loyal Baba Beg and others were commanded to bring in the Begam, etc. Baba Beg was killed in action while attempting to rescue the royal ladies. Shaham was raised to the peerage (*Amir*) by Akbar. He also held Ghazipur. Shaham heard that the revolt had broken out and Masum Khan Farankhudi had been driven back by the imperialists from Bahraich over the areas between Muhammadabad* to Kaliyanpur, a country which he plundered and intended to attack Jaunpur.

*It is in Sitapur district of U. P. Possibly it is a scribe's error for Muhammadpur in Saran.

Shaham Khan united his troops with those of Pahar Khan from Ghazipur and Kasim from Jaldpur to attack him. Pahar Khan was a Baluch. They were so successful in their joint endeavours that Masum Farankhudi applied to Mirza Aziz Koka to intercede for him with the Emperor.

In April, 1580, Muzaffar Khan was killed at Tanda; Raja Todarmall was besieged in Monghyr for four months until he was relieved by the gradual dispersal of the rebel contingents and the back of the rebellion was broken. In order to conciliate the rebels, Shah Mansur was removed from the office of the Finance Minister. Shahbaz Khan Qambu inflicted a severe defeat on a section of the insurgents near Sultanpur-Bilhari, 50 miles from Ajodhya and by 1584 the rebellion had been suppressed. There is only one other instance of Akbar's reign found in the *Chronicles of Hathwa Raj* family. It states that one of the early members, Yuvaraja Sahi, then residing at Kalianpur, which is contiguous to Husepur, wrested from Raja Kabul Mohammad of Barharia, *pargana* of Sipah. This person was supposed to be an Afghan noble, a partisan of the king of Bengal (Daud Khan*) who with other Afghan chiefs raised the standard of rebellion in Bihar during the reign of Akbar. He was killed in the battle and his fort was taken and destroyed by Yuvaraja Shahi who was allowed by the emperor to retain the *pargana* Sipah. Raja Kabul Mohammad is unknown to history though his descendants resided till eighteenth century at Barharia. It is quite possible that Raja Kabul Mohammad is no other than Masum Khan Kabuli—*Asi.*

After this for a long time we have no information about Saran till the seventeenth century. Peter Mundy, an English traveller, refers to a Raja of Kalianpur, who was at first well received by the then *Subahdar* of Bihar, Abdulla Khan Bahadur-Firoz Jung and honoured with a robe, at Patna; but was soon after imprisoned and his goods were plundered. whereupon his wife and friends rose in revolt and defeated Baba Beg, a revenue officer. Khawaja Anwar was sent to the aid of Baba Beg. Saran does not again come into prominence until the closing days of Mughal rule in Bihar.

MODERN PERIOD.

British Period.

The sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah in 1739 A. D. was a cataclysm. The effete Mughal Emperor was, however. allowed to continue. All legitimate government disappeared when the provinces taking advantage of the weakness of the centre became autonomous or paid only lip allegiance to the descendants of Babar and Akbar. Final *coup-de-grace* was given by the Marathas sweeping over the valleys of Sipra, Jumna and seven rivers to collect '*Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*'. Of all the European Trading Company established in

* Actually he was in league with Akbar's brother Mirza Muhammad Hakim.

India, the first to arrive were the Portugese; who left a record of rapine and plunder. It was Nuno da Cunha (1529—1538 A. D.), Viceroy of Portuguese possessions in the South India, who introduced the Jesuit torturing machines for the glory of God, and monsters in human shapes in the smiling valleys of Bengal. "They were never formed into a regular governorships but remained in loose dependence on the Captain of Ceylon. Yet they became very prosperous, and their headquarters Hooghly, grew into a wealthy city. After the capture of Hooghly by Shahjahan in 1632, the bravest of the Portuguese in Bengal became outlaws and pirates, and in conjunction with the Arakanese and the Maghs prayed upon the sea ports and commerce of the Bengal* coast." They went out in the same way that they had started.

European Factories.

The Dutch were the first European power to challenge the monopoly of the Portuguese. During the sixteenth century the successors of the Hanseatic League; the ports of Bruges, Antwerp and Amsterdam became great emporia where eastern products transported by the Portuguese, were distributed throughout Europe. Private Companies were formed in various parts of Orange and Holland; but in 1602 A. D. the States General consolidated them into the 'United East India Company of the Netherlands'. Having swept the Portuguese from the Jaffnapattanam, in Ceylon in 1668 A. D., they reached India and destroyed all hopes of Portuguese supremacy in the East. And, by 1664 A. D., they had established factories at Patna. The Patna College building itself, is a Dutch Factory House. They consolidated themselves in the Indian archipelago, at a later date, thereby commencing a long chapter of European colonial tyranny. They, however, lost hold in India.

The commercial possibilities of Patna had attracted another European merchant company. The first English commercial mission came from Agra in 1620, consisting of two Englishmen Hughes and Parker. But the great expense of land carriage first to Agra, and then to Surat so enhanced the price of the articles that the project was given up The second attempt was made in 1632, the agent being famous Peter Mundy. Mundy reported against the enterprise. It was not till 1650, that we find some English pioneers coming from Balasore and Hooghly. Shortly after this, the English must have established a small settlement at Patna, for in 1657, it is mentioned as a factory, under the control of the head agency at Hooghly.

The first English settlement was small enough, the merchants living and hiring houses in Patna, while their factories were built on the other side of the Ganges at Singia for saltpetre. Saltpetre was in great demand in Europe for the manufacture of gunpowder. The

* *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol. II, page 449.

English certainly did not put a blind eye to the values of other kinds of trade. Job Charnock was the chief of the factory from 1664 to 1680. Saran saltpetre was so good and so cheap that the contract for it was discontinued on the west coast in 1668, and at Masulipatam in 1670.

But by 1650, the Dutch had already been well established at Patna for sugar and saltpetre. Tavernier, who visited Patna with Bernier in 1666, and found it as a great commercial emporium states that " The Holland Company have a house there, by reason of their trade in saltpetre, which they refine at a great town called Chaupar (Chapra). Coming to Patna, we met the Hollanders in the street returning from Chaupar............ ". In 1712 when Farrukhsiyar advanced his claims to the throne, he laid the city of Patna under contribution; a list of rich men was drawn up, at the head of which stood the English Agent and the Dutch Chief, Van Hoorn, whose properties were confiscated. The Dutch had to pay two lakhs and lost all their property in Bihar. During the *Matsya-nyaya* that followed the invasion of Nadir Shah, the French and English East India Companys were able to defend their colonial interests during the absence of a stable government. They successfully fished in troubled waters of Indian politics and gained a firm foothold in the Ganga delta. The very first two stooges of the British, Mirzaffar and Mirqasim revolted against their emasculation. In 1727 A. D. Fakhra-ud-daula was appointed the Governor of Bihar and held that post for about five years.

Fakhra-ud-daula.

It was he who in 1726, sent a force into Saran against Shaikh Abdullah who " was a man of consequence, who seemed to be the main hinge of all the government business in the province, for he had been for a length of time always employed by every Governor, either as his Deputy or as his General or Farmer of the revenue. He had connection with almost all the zamindars, was greatly respected by every one of them, and had conquered the goodwill of the troops, as well as every individual in the province, where he was universally respected. Fakhra-ud-daula incited by a sense of jealousy set up several Chicanes against him, and he made him so uneasy that the other thought it expedient to quit his house at Azimabad (Patna) and repaired to the other side of the Ganages, where he had built a mud fort about the town of Siwan. The Governor, not satisfied with this retreat, crossed the river after him in the said castle. The man reduced to extremities, applied to Sadat Khan, Governor of Oudh his next neighbour, to whom he exposed his situation with the subject of the difference, and on his being sent for by him, he sallied out of the fort, forced bravely his passage through the Fakhra-ud-daula's camp and effected his retreat by valorous action in which he eluded Fakhra-ud-daula's inimical design and proved himself a soldier as well as a financier ".

Fakhr-ud-daula was dismissed by *Samsam-ud-daulah Khan-i-Dauran* and Shuja-ud-din was appointed to hold charge of the united *subahs* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

The Second British Invasion of Saran.

On the death of Shuja-ud-daulah, on 13th March 1739, he was succeeded by his son, Sarfaraz, entitled Ala-ud-daulah Haiderjang; by overthrowing him at the famous battle of Giria on 10th April 1740, Alivardi ascended the throne of Bengal. Alivardi died on 10th April 1756 and was succeeded by Siraj-ud-daula. The subsequent history is well known. It was when Siraj-ud-daula had been defeated that the British made their second appearance in Saran in pursuit of Monsieur Law, who had espoused the cause of the defeated Nawab. This detachment crossed over from the south of the Ganges, the passage taking them three days, owing to difficulties in obtaining ferry boats; and reached Chapra on the 4th August, only to learn that Law had already reached Varanasi. Eyre Coote then held a council of war, at which it was resolved, that they should return to Patna, because, they had no boats by which to convey the troops by river, while the roads were impassable, the country being under water; and also because they were afraid that the Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daula, whose territory lay on the other side of the Ghogra, would regard an advance as a *casus belli* Other strong objections against further advance were that sickness had broken out among the men, which the surgeon attributed to the soil being impregnated with saltpetre, and last, but not least that the *arrack* brought for the use of the soldiers was finished and they would get no fresh supply. The force accordingly returned to Patna, and thus ended the first expedition.

Saran and Early British Rule.

"Mir Qasim ascended the Masnad on October 20, 1760, amidst great pomp and eclat, and took great pains to impress on the wondering populace of Murshidabad that the deposition of Mirzaffar was right and just."* But very soon he was disillusioned and clashed with his patrons. But the series of defeats which he suffered at the hands of the English and the fall of Patna sent him as a refugee to Oudh. In April, Shuja-ud-daulah invested the city of Patna. In the battle of 3rd May before Patna the visiting forces were repulsed. The contending armies then remained inactive till 30th May when Shuja-ud-daulah raised the siege and retreated towards Maner. On the 23rd February 1764, in the decisive battle of Buxar the British became undisputed masters of Bihar and Bengal. In May, however, a detachment had been despatched through Saran and Ghazipur to follow up the defeat at Patna. Major Champion was in command of this expeditionary force.

The next time that a British force appeared in the district, it met with a disaster. "This was in 1763, after Ellis, the Agent at

* *Calcutta Review*, 1883, Vol LXXXVI, pp. 86-87.

Patna, thinking that war with Mir Qasim Ali was inevitable, had made an ill-advised attempt to seize the city. Some troops of the Nawab having come up, the English were driven back into the factory, and then, as their provisions began to run short and their position was untenable, they resolved to try and find shelter in the territory of the Nawab of Oudh. They accordingly crossed the Ganges during the night of the 29th June, and commenced their march towards Chapra. The rains, however, had now set in with great violence, the whole country was under water and the detachment was destitute of provisions and ill-supplied with ammunition. To add to their distress, they were harassed by the enemy, who speedily followed in pursuit; the inhabitants rose against them; and a strong force under the command of Somru crossed from Buxar to intercept their retreat. Notwithstanding these difficulties, they fought their way as far as Manjhi, where they were surrounded by the enemy under Somru and Ram Nidhi, Faujdar of Saran, whom the author of the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin* describes as an ungrateful Bengali. Here on the 1st July, Captain Carstairs drew out his shattered force to meet the attack; and though handicapped by want of guns and ammunition, offered a brief but ineffectual resistance. One battalion charged with fixed bayonets and compelled the enemy to give ground; but the Europeans, worn out with fatigue and want of nourishment, refused to follow them; and eventually the whole force laid down their arms and surrendered. Many of the sepoys took service with Mir Qasim Ali, and the remainder were released after being stripped of their equipment; some of the foreigners among the Europeans also entered the enemy's ranks; but with the exception of a few who managed to escape, all the English officers, soldiers and servants of the Company were carried off to Patna, where they were afterwards cruelly massacred."

"In 1766, Lord Clive himself came to Chapra, accompanied by General Carnac, after suppressing what is known as the White Mutiny. Here he was met by Shuja-ud-daula, Nawab Vazier of Oudh, by Munir-ud-daula, the minister of the Emperor Shah Alam, and by Raja Balwant Singh of Benares; and a conference was held at which a treaty was entered into by the contracting parties for their mutual defence against the Marathas. According to the *Sair-ul-Mutakharin*, after signing the conventions, "these noble personages exchanged entertainments and curious and costly presents, and the Vizier having been entertained with a mock battle among the European soldiers, who managed their guns and muskets with an amazing quickness and celerity, made them a present of Rs. 1,000 and returned to his capital."

First Freedom Struggle in Saran.

"The early days of British administration were troubled ones, owing to the rebellion of Maharaja Fateh Sahi of Husepur. Fateh

Sahi was descended from a line of semi-independent chiefs who had long exercised great power in Saran; and his immediate predecessor, Sardar Sahi, had demolished the fort of Majhauli and compelled its Raja to agree not to go about with flags and drums, the ensigns of Rajaship, until he had retaken them by force from the Rajas of Husepur. A kinsman of the powerful Balwant Singh, he chafed against the British rule, refused to pay revenue, resisted the troops sent against him, and was with much difficulty expelled from Husepur. Husepur, which appears to have been contiguous with the present subdivision of Siwan and Gopalganj was then farmed out to one Gobind Ram; but Fateh Sahi, who had retired into a large tract of forest, called Bagh Jogini, lying between Gorakhpur and Saran and adjoining the territory under the Vizier of Oudh, took every opportunity to make raids into the district, to plunder the villages, and to stop the collections of revenue. The unsettled state of the country, his easy access to the territories of an independent prince, where British troops were unable to pursue him, and the impenetrable forest which surrounded his retreat, the collusion of the agents of the Vizier of Oudh, and above all, the attachment of the people to their expelled Raja and their dislike of a Government farmer, all contributed to favour his designs; and he kept the country in a state of terror and the British authorities constantly on the alert. In 1772, Gobind Ram, the Government Farmer, was put to death in one of these raids, and the revenue collections having come to a standstill, the Collector of Sarkar Saran recommended that Fateh Sahi should be induced to come in on the promise of an allowance being made him by Government. This proposal was accepted; Gobind Ram's murder was forgiven on Fateh Sahi's solemnly denying any knowledge of the transaction; and Fateh Sahi came to Patna, and promised to remain quietly with his family at Husepur. His turbulent disposition did not allow him to remain in long quiet, however, and within two months he broke his promise and once more became a border free-booter.

"At this time Husepur was under the charge of one Mir Jamal, who was styled Superintendent of Government Revenue; and after being under the direct management of Government for a year, it was let out in farm to Basant Sahi, a cousin of Fateh Sahi, on the security of Raja Chait Singh of Benares. In 1775 both Basant Sahi and Mir Jamal were killed in a night attack by Fateh Sahi at Jadopur, a short distance from Husepur; and Fateh Sahi eluded the pursuit of two companies of sepoys under Lieutenant Erskine, which were in the neighbourhood, and escaped with his booty to his forest fastness Basant Singh's head, it is said, was cut off and sent to his widow, who ascended a funeral pyre with it in her lap and became a *suti.* In dying, she pronounced a terrible curse on any of her descendants who should partake any food with Fateh Sahi or any of his race: to this day, it is said, the Maharajas of Hathwa have religiously refrained from touching food or drinking even a drop of water, while

travelling through that part of the Gorakhpur district which is the property of the Rajas of Tamkuhi, the descendants of Fateh Sahi.

"The Provincial Council at Patna were now in despair of capturing the rebel chief. He had under him a trained body of horsemen and matchlockmen; the number of his followers had been swollen by crowds of *fakirs* and banditti, and Lieutenant Erskine reported that there were so many entrances to his jungle retreat that it would take at least a battalion of sepoys to block them up and pursue him with any prospect of success. The Council, accordingly wrote to Warren Hastings, urging that as Fateh Sahi had taken shelter in the dominions of the Nawab of Oudh, the latter should be asked to assist the British troops. This was done, and a body of sepoys under Lieutenant Hardinge was sent in pursuit of Fateh Sahi. The expedition came to nothing, as Saiyid Muhammad, the Faujdar of Gorakhpur, was in collusion with Fateh Sahi, and refused to deliver an attack, though he was induced to march within 150 yards of the rebel's entrenchments. The troops were then marched back to their headquarters at Baragaon, or Line Bazar as it was also called from being a cantonment of company's troops; and a reward of Rs. 10,000 was offered to any one who would arrest him. All efforts to seize him ended, however, in equal failure, though troops scoured the countryside from time to time. The *outlaw* remained at large, laying the whole border land under contribution, and such was the terror he inspired that the local authorities were afraid to grant his lands to Mahesh Datt Sahi, his nephew and the son of Basant Sahi, lest he should suffer the fate of his father and the revenue administration become still more disorganised. After the death of Mahesh Datt Sahi, the estate was restored, in 1791, to his infant son, Chhattardhari Singh; and in 1808 Fateh Sahi, whose powers for mischief were gradually curtailed as a more settled administration was introduced, closed his turbulent career by becoming a *fakir*.* "

Fateh Sahi was Kunwar Singh of Saran, and in fact he was probably the first to raise the standard of revolt when whole of India had yet to realise the humiliating experiences of a foreign rule. Even in nineteenth century English Society of India admirers were not lacking. Thus one gentleman writing under the pen name 'G. P. S.' in *Calcutta Review* summed up Fateh Sahi in the following way: Actually he was Maharaja Fateh Sahi of Husepur. "Fateh Sahi's lot was cast in troubled times. The Muhamadan power was fast declining, and the English Government was not yet firmly established in the land. Shah Alam the last of the Moghuls, the imperial wanderer, had, by his repeated invasions done more to unsettle the affairs of Behar, than to gain any advantage for himself. He had been interested to these attempts, by some of the chief zamindars, amongst others Balwant Sinha of Benares, a relation and friend of Fateh Sahi's family. Mir Qasim's attempt at uprooting the British

* The Aristocracy of Behar. *Calcutta Review*, 1883, Vol. LXXVI. pp. 80 ff.

power had, like other attempts of the kind, signally failed, and Colonel Clive had only thus obtained for his master, the East India Company, the Dewany of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The administration of force in Bihar was vested in a joint Council of Europeans and natives, and when, at the end of the year 1767, the Revenue Collector of Sircar Sarun demanded rents on behalf of the Company, Fateh Sahi not only refused to pay them, but gave fight to the Company's troops who were sent against him in consequence, and it was not without much difficulty that these troops succeeded in expelling him from Hosiarpur (*sic.* Husepur). The revenue of the district Hosiarpur was then farmed out to one Govindram; but Fateh Sahi, who had retired into the jungles bordering on the then independent dominions of the Vizier of Oudh and the province of Bihar, watched every opportunity of making raids into the district to plunder the villages and stop the collections of revenue."*

To appreciate the 'blood, toil and tears' of the eighteenth century, we have to analyse the causes. During the century that followed Plassey, the people of Bihar went on paying indemnity for the great betrayal of the country by Mirzaffar, Rajballabh and Umichand. The people suddenly enslaved, felt discontented when they realised that their social, political and economic life was vitally affected.

The greatest evil that emerged out of Plassey was not merely economic exploitation but emasculation of the country. To be Nawab, the candidates had paid heavily to the East India Company and their senior officials. The Zulahas (weavers) of the famous Dacca Muslin were maimed to serve the interests of British trade. The Company's officers like Clive, Ammyatt, Barwell, Vansittart, undersold the sons of the soil and amassed fabulous fortunes.† Eighteenth century England dubbed them Nabobs. The oppressive agrarian policy ruined both the peasants as well as the landlords. The inexorable auction, laws and farming unsettled many hereditary zamindars; but more than that, new farmers like Govindram of Saran or Ganga Govinda Sinha of Calcutta were hated for their tyranny.

The social and religious causes were two other factors which brought untold miseries to the people of Bengal and Bihar. The superior attitude of the Britishers irritated the population. Along with them, came a new class of semi-educated men, as petty clerks,

* *Calcutta Review*, 1883, Vol LXXXVI, pp. 86—87.

† "Such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery and corruptions and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal nor have such and so many fortunes been acquired in so unjust and rapacious a manner. The three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa producing a clear revenue of £ 30,00,000 sterling have been under the absolute management of the Company's servants, ever since Mirjafar's restoration to the Subhedarship; and they have, both civil and military, exacted and levied contributions from every man of power and consequence from the Nawab down to the lowest zamindars." (Lord Clive)

amils, surveyors, etc., whose avarice and currupt methods reacted on the new rule. The men who belonged to the old Mughal aristocracy, Hindu or Muslim, were not respected. The new people came from the lower middle class without the background of experience and tradition and made themselves practically the rulers of the country, in the role of the middle men between the white masters and the ruled. With the result, that resistance against the British, stiffened, due to political. economic, personal reasons, misrule and maladministration. Maharaja Fateh Sahi was not a solitary instance. Throughout India, an undercurrent of resistance was noticeable. Chait Singh of Varanasi, Wazier Ali of Lucknow, Rajas of Malabar, a series of insurrections in Assam, the *Killahdars* of Bundelkhand and Vijaya Singh of Rohilkhand are a few other instances

Saran under Company's rule.

Immediately after the annexation, the district continued to be known as *Sarkar Saran* and included the present district of Champaran. Chapra town was the headquarters of the area. Quite early it became evident that the location of the Courts at Saran was not merely inconvenient for the people of Champaran, but constituted a denial of the fundamentals of justice. One good point however was the separation of the Judgeship and Magistracy at a very early date. It was at Saran in 1836 that the first Indian Deputy Collector was appointed. His name was Agah Ibrahim Ali Khan. In 1844, Edward Thornton published two Gazetteers of the territories under the Government of the East India Company where Saran figured. Slavery was practised in the eighteenth century at Saran. The European settlers mostly had some slaves as their servants. Most of the public works were executed by the British administrators with the help of the convicts in jail. This method was also in vogue in Patna as noticed by H. Beveridge. Indigo troubles were very prominent early in the nineteenth century and in some of the letters preserved in Saran Collectorate, mention has been made that the cultivators strongly resented the plantations of indigo though the Revenue Board as early as 22nd November 1793 had informed the Collector of Sarkar Saran, that Governor-General was opposed to Europeans holding lands for cultivation of indigo.† *Sati* was prevalent in Saran. Regulation XVII of 1829 abolishing the practice, was in the very early stages more violated than respected. River dacoities were not an uncommon feature and Guard Boats were established on the river Ganges between Hajipur and the western extremity of Sarkar Saran. The boats were of 14 ores each and were procured from Tripurah. Saran was rather notorious for *thuggs*. There was no particular caste or community that was addicted to this form of crime. It was more or less followed as a profession by men of various status and castes. The *modus operandi* was to follow the travellers and some how to gain their confidence. Occasionally the cart-men were in league with the *thugs*. The

so-called '*Sannyasi* rebels' made famous in Bankim Chandra's *Anandamatha* did not fail Saran. In 1767, a body of *Sannyasis,* 5,000 strong entered Sarkar Saran. The *Faujdar* sent two Companies of sepoys under a sergeant who overtook them. The *Sannyasis* made about-turn and allowed the troops to waste their ammunitions, then they fell on them, killed or wounded about 80 and put them to flight.*

Saran saw the beginning of Roman Catholic Mission in Bihar in 1740. Muqurrab Khan or Sheikh Hussain of Panipath and Tarrana-Saharanpur was, like his father, a noted physician; and held the rank of five thousand. He was appointed Governor of Bihar in 1620 A. D. According to some he had been converted to the Catholic faith when he was Mughal Ambassador at Goa. The first Catholic priest at Patna came in his time. The first mission however was established at Bettiah in 1847.*

Movement of 1857–1859.

Since its outbreak in 1857 the historic Movement of 1857 (widely known as Sepoy Mutiny) has been a favourite subject of discussion. It is beyond the range of a District Gazetteer to discuss at length the causes which led to the outbreak of the Movement of 1857. Briefly, the rapid expansion of the British dominion in India, attended as it was by changes in the administrative system and modes of existence to which the people had been accustomed through long ages, disturbed the placid currents of Indian life and produced commotions in different parts of the country. The pre-1857 days in India witnessed social and economic changes which were fraught with tremendous consequences for the future of the country. The socio-economic reforms of the pre-mutiny period evoked protests from the affected class of the Indian population. The previous historians both at home and abroad had studied the Movement mainly in its political aspect and from the point of view of the military exploits and operations of the British Generals who conducted their campaigns against the rebels. Mr Hara Prasad Chattopadhaya had observed in his book "The Sepoy Mutiny, 1857", "But no Kaye or Malleson has reviewed the mutiny against a proper social background or has made a careful study of its socio-economic implications'.† Mr. A. P. Middleton in the last *District Gazetteer of Saran,* published in 1930, had quoted *verbatim* the paragraphs on this subject from the *District Gazetteer of Saran,* published in 1907. It is now possible to review the background and the development in the light of latest researches on the documents of the period preserved in the District Record Room and the National Archives, New Delhi. Obviously these source materials were not looked into before.

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* Sarkar Saran —P. C. Roy Choudhury.

† There have however, been some recent researches on the Socio-economic implication (P. C. R. C.).

Some of the cross currents that affected the life of the people of the district and practically throughout Bihar have to be indicated. Saran district has been noted for the sturdy and stalwart Bhojpuris who along with their counterpart in the neighbouring district of Shahabad have always been noted for their martial spirit and physical endurance. The army and police personnel were largely drawn from them. But they were destined to remain at the lowest rung of the ladder. There was a sort of step-motherly treatment to them in spite of the important role they filled in. The German Evangelical Lutheran Mission was established in Saran in 1840. The activities of the missionaries led to misgivings in some quarters. There was a sort of suspicion that the missionaries drew their inspiration from the European administrators. The suspicion of the people received further confirmation in the new Regulation which introduced common messing system in jails. The book '*Sarkar Saran*', published from the Gazetteers' Revision Section, Bihar (1956), mentions that "The introduction of messing system in Saran and Shahabad jails had been preceded by a hunger strike by the prisoners. Six hundred of the Saran and Shahabad prisoners had refused their food for two days in order to show their dissatisfaction against the messing system about to be introduced. A letter from the Sessions Judge of Saran, dated Chapra, the 28th June 1845, in the correspondence volume for 1845 refers to the hunger-strike. It further refers to the difficulty in finding a cook as a cook selected by one set of Brahmins might be objected to by another set of the same".

There was also a strong under-current of disaffection towards the constituted authority in Bihar due to a firm idea that the administrators and the European indigo planters were hand-in-glove with each other and that the common man had no one to look to for the inequity he suffered in the hands of the planters. From one end of North Bihar to the other there were indigo concerns (*kothis*) within 10 or 15 miles of each other and the tenantry had to grow indigo whether they wanted it or not and even when the cultivation of indigo was no economic gain to them. The original set of planters had been substituted at various places by their employees who were least sympathetic to the cultivators. The cultivators had also to part with the indigo at a rock bottom price while the planters and the middlemen made themselves rich at their cost. The indigo *ryots* had also to pay a number of illegal taxes (*abwabs*) and *abwabs* had to be paid first before the rent could be taken. The indigo planters had their powerful Planters' Association and the Bihar Light Horse which was a sort of defence force manned by the Europeans and Anglo-Indians of the district. The European administrators freely joined the Bihar Light Horse in their frequent camps. The meetings of the Indigo Planters' Association were usually attended by the European administrators. The Planters' Clubs or Gymkhanas were also meant for the few European administrators. These circumstances naturally

led to have an impression that the planters and the administrators were different phases of one and the same institution.

It may, however, be mentioned that there were exceptions among the administrators. One such exception was William Tayler who was the Commissioner of Patna Division in 1857. William Tayler has been correctly described as a strong man who stood no nonsense and shirked no responsibility.*

The news of the outbreak at Meerut had caused widespread disquiet in Bihar. The report from Banaras caused a panic and many Europeans left their posts in the countryside to seek shelter at Patna. From the narrative (papers no. 5 relative to the Mutiny in the East Indies, presented to both Houses of the Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1857, printed by Harrison and Sons, London, no. 1, Fort William, August 22, 1857, no. 84 Public), it appears that a concerted action was in progress in Bihar to overthrow the alien government. The report mentions that "during the early part of June considerable excitement prevailed throughout Bihar in consequence of the general spread of a belief, inculcated by designing persons that the Government contemplated active interference with the religion of the people. There was a general tranquillity, but it was believed that the safety of the province depended on the fidelity of the troops at Dinapur. It was conceded that the Muhammadans were thoroughly disaffected. Precautionary measures had been adopted by adding to the police force, by watching and regulating the *ghats*, by guarding the frontiers, by the removal of the treasure at Arrah and Chupra to Patna, by the formation of a volunteer guards at Patna. The Rajas of Bettiah and Hathwa had addressed letters expressing of loyalty and devotion to government. Occurrences at Gorakhpur and Azamgarh adjoining Chupra and Arrah had led to a certain amount of panic and most of the European residents connected with the railway had taken refuge in Dinapur. There was considerable apprehension at Gaya owing to the presence of bad characters in that city".

About the attitude of the zamindars Richardson, Magistrate of Muzaffarpore wrote to the Secretary to Government of Bengal on June 29, 1857, thus:

"The zamindars of the district seem generally well-wishers of Government—no doubt a few have talked seditiously. I have one at present on trial but by far the larger portion is well affected." The records, however, show that though zamindars, traders and bankers of Tirhoot generally went against the sepoys it would be far from truth to hold that they did not have any popular support. They were joined by many of the civil population in the different *pergunnahs* of the district. The Maharajah of Bettiah remained loyal to Government and was awarded a title. Even before the actual

* *Eighteen Fifty-Seven*, page 245—S. N. Sen.

outbreak of the mutiny, he wrote to Tayler expressing his loyalty and promising to remain loyal to Government. "I observe", he wrote to Tayler on June 9, 1857, "that some evil-minded men have studiously given out unfavourable reports that Government have a design to convert their subjects to Christianity, which has produced a panic among the people who have actually begun to revolt. I deny their assertions and most truthfully declare that Government have no such designs. The stories are mere inventions of bad men to serve their ends. Now nearly a hundred years the British are the paramount rulers of India; they have in no instance interfered with religion of our forefathers; on the contrary, they have allowed us a free exercise of our religious functions and they have further enacted a law that whoever scoffs at one's religion or molests one in religious duties should be severely punished". The Maharajah wrote further in this connection thus: "I have proclaimed to my people through my several *tehsildars* the purport of the first paragraph of this letter and have assured them that they must soften their anxiety and fears, as Government has already taken prompt steps to punish the disturbers of the public peace by strong hands and that the disturbance created by the insurgents will soon be settled". The Maharajah was true to his words. He remained a firm supporter of Government during the upheaval of 1857–1859.

The trends of events in Patna being the higher seat of administration had their effect on Saran. The attitude of Tayler towards the fanatical Wahabis of Patna also precipitated the revolt of 1857 in Bihar. The Wahabis of Patna City were engaged in a general conspiracy against the Government, and had their agents in various parts of the country. On the 12th June, a Najib was found spreading sedition among Rattray's Sikhs. He was found guilty, and hanged. The Machiavellian move of the Commissioner of Patna in fraudulently detaining three prominent Wahabi leaders of Patna produced widespread commotion throughout the division comprising the districts of Patna, Gaya, Shahabad, Saran and Tirhut. Tayler put the arrested Wahabis in a bungalow under his personal surveillance This unprecedented action had a great reaction especially among the Muslim population. The Wahabi movement in Bihar is a definite landmark prior to the outburst of the insurrection of 1857 There could be no doubt that this movement had been preparing the ground for some years along with other forces for the flare up. Patna being the nerve-centre of this movement, parts of Bihar had been well saturated with the idea that the British hold was irksome and has to be removed. It is true that Wahabism was more confined to the Muslims but a dynamic ideology has an osmosis process.

Mutiny in the north-western province had its early repercussion on Bihar. At Rohini, a village in the Deoghur subdivision in the district of Santhal Parganas, three men of the 5th Irregular Cavalry rose in revolt on the evening of June 12, 1857. They killed the

Commander of the Regiment, Major Macdonald, Sir Norman Leslie, Adjutant of the Commander and Dr. Grant, Assistant Surgeon, attached to the Cavalry Regiment, managed to effect their escape with injuries only. The mutineers were seized, tried and hanged to death in the presence of the entire regiments. The failure of the rising at Rohini and the execution of the three mutineers as mentioned above did by no means arrest the progress of revolt in Bihar. The situation in the West Bihar Division with Patna as its headquarters was gradually growing alarming. Agents of conspiracy were appointed by the Wahabis and regularly paid; subscriptions to finance mutinous preparations were raised, and collections were distributed among the agents of conspiracy. In a letter, dated June 19, 1857, William Tayler wrote to Frederick Halliday on the occasion of Patna thus: " All is seemingly quiet in Patna but the quiet itself is suspicious. There is a general feeling that something is brewing and I have secret information of nightly meetings, collection of arms, etc., among the Wahabis and some others. A little more, and I shall act."* It was this suspicion which led Tayler to arrest the three ring leaders and issued orders that the city of Patna should be disarmed and that the citizens were to keep indoors after 9 o'clock in the night. On July 3 some 200 men with flags and slogans and armed with guns assembled in the house of a Mohammadan bookseller, named Peer Ali Khan and thence proceeded towards and attacked the Roman Catholic Church in the heart of the city. This was followed by the murder of Dr. R. Lyell, the Principal Assistant to the Opium Agent of Bihar. Tayler had no doubt in his mind about the aggressive designs of the Wahabis of Patna so far as he could study them. Consequent of the failure of the attempted rising of July 3 the ring leaders sought to be arrested, and the city underwent a thorough search. Tayler's policy of constant arrests and continued hangings temporarily suppressed the mutinous spirit. But it was like a pyrrhic victory which further gave much strain and stress to the Government. The bold action of Tayler was, of course, warmly supported by the mercantile community of Calcutta, the commercial interests of which demanded a peaceful state of things in Patna, Dinapore and Tirhut. The interests of the mercantile community of Calcutta were bound up with the indigo plantation in Tirhut.

But in spite of Tayler's precautions the sepoys of Dinapore mutinied on the 25th July and soon revolts broke out in Gaya, Shahabad, Champaran, Saran and Tirhut. The subsequent development in Saran has been described in the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* as follows :—

" The only other notable event in the history of Saran was the Mutiny of 1857. All was quiet till the end of July, largely owing to the bold policy pursued by Major Holmes, the Commandant of

* As quoted in Prof. H. P. Chattopadhyay's '*The Sepoy Mutiny, 1857*'.

the 12th Irregular Cavalry at Sugauli, who firmly repressed disaffection, and on his own authority, declared martial law. This order was cancelled as soon as Government learnt of it, but in the meantime it had been effectual in preventing any outbreak. On the 25th July the regiment mutinied, savagely murdered Major Holmes and their officers, and then marched off to Azamgarh, attacking on the way the houses of Messrs. Lynch and McDonnel, the Deputy Magistrate and Sub-Deputy Opium Agent at Siwan, who narrowly escaped with their lives. On hearing of this outbreak, the European residents, being unable to defend the station, left Chupra on the 28th July, and took refuge at Dinapore, but they returned on the 12th August to find everything in a tranquil and orderly state, with the jail and treasury untouched, and the detachment of Najibs still loyal, order having been preserved during their absence by a Muhammadan gentleman named Kazi Ramzan Ali. Outside the headquarters station, however, the country was seriously threatened by the occupation of Gorakhpur by the rebels under Muhammad Hussain, who had declared himself its *Chakladar* under the king of Oudh; and in October one party of 500 men entered the district and plundered two factories, one near Darauli belonging to a native, Babu Ram, and the other at Gangua to Mr. Mcleod, whose assistants had barely time to escape. After this special measures had to be taken for the defence of the district; and a Gurkha regiment together with Captain Sotheby's Naval Brigade being stationed at Siwan, the rebels fell back, and the Sonepur fair was held as usual and passed off quietly.

Subsequently, in December, 1857, another small body of rebels crossed from Gorakhpur and attacked the outpost of Guthni, which was held by a detachment of 55 Sikhs, who thinking a large force were on them, fled without offering any resistance. Re-inforcements from the Gurkhas and Naval Brigade were promptly sent up, but before their arrival the enemy had escaped across the river after burning the Sikh lines. Towards the close of this month Jang Bahadur arrived, with a Nepalese army, and on the 26th December Colonel Rowcroft, with a force of less than 1,000 men, defeated a force of not less than 6 000 or 7,000 rebels at Sohanpur on the Gorakhpur frontier; while a successful fight took place on the same day at Sahibganj, 5 miles from Pipra, between two regiments sent out by Jang Bahadur and a party of rebels. These successes had the effect of clearing the districts of the Patna Division north of the Ganga, and after this, though Chapra was several times threatened, there was no real danger for some time. A force of sailors and Sikhs was posted at Chapra; a levy of 200 men was raised and organised by Mr. McDonell, the Sub-Deputy Opium Agent at Siwan, while two armed steamers, the Jumna and Meghna cruised in the Ganges and Gogra.

In April, 1858, there were grave apprehensions that Kuar Singh might advance on this district; and once, when an incursion seemed imminent, the ladies, and treasure amounting to 6 lakhs, were

sent to Dinapore, while the residents set to work to fortify the house of the Raja of Hathwa. These fears were not unnatural as it was estimated that as many as 10,000 sepoys were natives of Saran. It was well known that the treasury of the Raja contained property to the value of a crore of rupees, which might well tempt them to make a dash into Saran; 'nor', remarked the Lieutenant-Governor, "should we, in the event of any attempts on the place, have been able to render the slightest assistance to this loyal family. which had stood firmly by us during the whole disturbances". No attack, however, was made by any large force; though the district was infested by scattered bands of mutineers. One such party delivered a night attack on Captain Miles's outpost at Itwa, but were repulsed by the Siwan levy and a few Sikhs; and a few days later Captain Miles retaliated by attacking them at a place called Laheji and drove them in rout before him. After this, the rebels not finding the support and sympathy they expected, left the district in peace.

This sketch of the course of the Mutiny in Saran would be incomplete without a mention of the District Magistrate, Mr. Fraser McDonell. When the European residents left Chapra at the end of July, 1857, and took refuge in Dinapore, Mr. McDonell seized the opportunity to volunteer for the expedition which started under the command of Captain Dunbar for the relief of Arrah. As is well known, this expedition ended in a disastrous failure. The troops fell into an ambuscade; the survivors fell back in utter rout; and it was at this juncture that Mr. McDonell distinguished himself. To quote from the account given in Sir John Kaye's *History of the Sepoy War*:—"Disastrous as was the retreat, it was not all disgraceful. Individual acts of heroism saved the honour of the British character. Two volunteers, Mr. McDonell and Mr. Ross Mangles of the Civil Service, besides doing excellent service on the march, made themselves remarkable by acts of conspicuous daring. The former, though wounded, was one of the last men to enter the boats. The insurgents had taken the oars of his boat and had lashed the rudder, so that though the wind was favourable for retreat, the current carried the boat back to the river bank. Thirty-five soldiers were in the boat, sheltered from fire by the usual thatch covering; but while the rudder was fixed, the inmates remained at the mercy of the enemy. At this crisis, Mr. McDonell stepped out from the shelter, climbed on to the roof of the boat, perched himself on the rudder and cut the lashings amidst a storm of bullets from the contiguous bank. Strangely enough, not a ball struck him; the rudder was loosened, the boat answered to the helm, and by Mr. McDonell's brilliant act. the crew were saved from certain destruction".

Mr. McDonell received the Victoria Cross as a reward for his gallantry; and subsequently was specially selected to accompany the force under Brigadier Doughlas and General Lugard in Azamgarh. During his absence Mr. Richardson, the Collector, performed the

duties of District Magistrate, and showed himself very active and successful in the pursuit and apprehension of mutineers. Another officer of the same name who distinguished himself was Mr. E. McDonell, the Sub-Deputy Opium Agent, who raised and organised the Siwan levy; and last, but not least, among those who did loyal service was the Raja of Hathwa who in the words of the Lieutenant-Governor, "came forward with offers of assistance, placed men and elephants at the disposal of Government, and gave praiseworthy aid and support to Government during the whole progress of the rebellion".*

There are a number of important documents in the Old Correspondence Volumes preserved in the Saran Record Room. Their digest has been given in '*Sarkar Saran*' published from Gazetteers' Revision Section (1956) and is a good source material for developments of the movement.

Saran district, because of the heavy river traffic, proximity to the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh and her sturdy people had its importance in 1857. Buxar which had an important fort was easily vulnerable from the river. The river front needed careful watch in troubles sometimes. On the 20th November 1857 in his letter no. 1663, the Commissioner of Patna asked the Magistrate of Sarun not to allow any boat containing either grain or war-like stores to pass to Gorakhpur. At one stage as the old correspondence shows the Commissioner of Patna Division was apprehensive of an attack of four thousand armed men with guns raiding Chuprah from Gorakhpur side. The Secretary to the Government of Bengal could not promise any particular help and the Commissioner was asked to utilise all his resources. The Commissioner was authorised to utilise the existing army and to deploy the men from other places and to utilise the Naval Brigade under Captain Sotheby. The Commissioner was further asked to utilise the steam ferry boats. During the height of the troubles British gun-boats used to go up and down the river by Chuprah giving protection and in checking insurrection.

Gun-boats.

The Commissioner of Patna informed the Magistrate of Chuprah on 14th August 1857 that a gun-boat armed with a twelve pounder Howitzer and eleven Europeans with enfield rifles were sent to Revelganj The idea was to watch the mouth of the Gogra for interception of any communication between Faizabad for arms and ammunition without causing any interruption to trade as far as possible.

From letter no. 863, dated the 24th August 1857, it appears that Martial Law had been proclaimed in Saran district and the Commissioner in several letters had elaborated on the procedure for trials under Martial Law.

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* *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930).

Rana Jung Bahadur of Nepal.

There are a number of letters in the Old Correspondence Volumes of 1857-58 which indicate the great help from Rana Jung Bahadur of Nepal. The Collector was warned to be extremely cautious about *Rashud* (Supply) and arrangements at the *ghats* for the crossing of the troops from Nepal were perfect. There is some reference to a Mukhtear at Bettiah who gave some trouble to the arrangements and there was a talk of prosecuting the Mukhtear. The idea of prosecution was, however, dropped at the instance of Rana Jung Bahadur.

The Loyalists.

In the National Archives in New Delhi there is a list of Indians who rendered loyal services to the British Government and were rewarded (Foreign Miscellaneous Records no. 383). The list mentions the following persons of Saran district :—

" (25) Shah Khyrat Hossain.

(26) Shah Ahmad Hossain.

(27) Ramzan Ali Gazee—When station was abandoned by the officials, he took the management of offices into his own hand, held *Cutchery* regularly and on the return of the Civil Officers handed over the station and district in good order.

(28) Moharajah Rajeendar Kishen Bahadur of Bettiah and (29) Moharajah Chutter Dharee Singh of Hutwa—Both displayed conspicuous loyalties and opposed the rebel. Both the Rajas supplied *Sowars* and foot-men to prevent the Mutineers from crossing the Gogra and entering Champaran and Saran from Gorakhpur. Supplied men and provisions.

(30) Mohomed Wajid, Munsif of Saran.

(31) Darogah of Tajpoore, Saran.

(32) Enayat Hossem, Darogah of Hossapore (Saran).

(33) Luchman Sahah, Kamdar of Barrowly (Saran)."

The narrative of 1857—1859 in Saran will be incomplete without a reference of Kunwar Singh, the stormy petrel of Bihar who played a unique role in the revolt of 1857—1859. Kunwar Singh got wide support from the people of Saran. It is said that he hatched a plan to overthrow the British Government along with the leading personalities of Bihar in the Sonepur fair preceding the revolt of 1857. While at the zenith of his power and after a series of exploits in Eastern Uttar Pradesh Kunwar Singh had crossed the Ganga on the 21st April 1858 at Sheopur *Ghat*. This crossing at Sheopur *Ghat* was a memorable event. From the letter of McDonell, Magistrate of Saran, to the Commissioner of the Patna Division on July 18, 1858, it is clear when Kunwar Singh and his army appeared there was only one small boat at the *Ghat*. A few of his men crossed

over with this boat and within a short time with the assistance of a number of the inhabitants of the village on the river a number of *ghat* boats that had been sunk on the Shahabad side of the stream were floated. Kunwar Singh's men crossed over by these boats and also waylaid a few covered commercial boats which were plying with grains and sugar. The bags of grains and sugar were thrown on the bank and the boats were utilised. The Magistrate remarks that Kunwar Singh could get so many boats at a very short notice because he had numerous friends on the either side bank willing to render him assistance.

The old correspondence preserved in Saran Record Room makes it clear that a good number of the soldiers who had rebelled came from Saran district. There was a large number of military pensioners in Saran district and the Magistrate had stopped payment of the pension in the case of many of the military pensioners. He insisted on their personal presence and there used to be a frequent watch on them as they were treated with a good deal of suspicion. This was another reason why there was a great resentment against the administration.

Kunwar Singh's death on the 26th April 1858 after the eventful victory of 23rd April 1858 proved more of a menace to British authorities in Saran. Deprived of his leadership his men became indisciplined, broke into batches of 100 or 200 persons and went on looting, burning and plundering the countryside. They reduced the eastern Gazeepur district into complete anarchy and the old correspondence for 1858 in the District Record Room amply bears out the anxiety of the Magistrate to keep Saran unmolested. The letters from June, 1858, onwards show that the Magistrate was constantly appealing to Dinapore for the deployment of a few Companies of British and Sikh troops. Kunwar Singh's men, it appears from the correspondence, made a particular target on the police thanas. Several Sub-Inspectors of Police including the Sub-Inspector of Darauli were waylaid and killed.

In a letter, dated the 14th June 1858, the Magistrate of Saran informed the Commissioner of Patna that the police force would be absolutely inadequate to stop the rebels from crossing the river. He requested the Commissioner to call upon the Brigadier commanding Dinapore Division to send one Company of H. M. 35th to occupy Chapra for the time being. He further pointed out that not much hope could be fixed on the Sewan Levy as most of them were partially trained. There was a Naval Brigade cruising on the rivers near Chapra but this was also a very small military aid.

In a letter, dated June 15, 1858, the Magistrate informed the Commissioner that a small band of rebels armed with muskets and bayonets were creating havoc in the vicinity of Raghunathpur Police Chowkee and trying to kill the Police. He did not have much

reliance on the zamindars and had offered a reward of Rs. 500 for the apprehension of the rebels or for bringing in their bodies.

The Magistrate had called upon the Rajas of Hatwa, Bettiah and other zamindars to assist in guarding the *ghats* both public and private. Letter no. 37, dated the 18th February 1858, from the Magistrate of Saran, to the Commissioner of Patna makes it clear that although the strength of the thanas had been increased and he had severely warned the zamindars and called upon them to give help; he was not sanguine in case there was an attack. He had stopped the prisoners from working on the roads. By this time Gazeepur and Gorakhpur had been in a state of deplorable confusion.

The mutineers were extremely vindictive. On the 5th October 1858 the Magistrate reported to the Commissioner that one Mahadev Lall Barkandaz was waylaid and his nose was cut into two and his right hand was chopped off because he was found carrying an important message from the Magistrate. The rebels had completely upset the river traffic and plundered several boats containing coal, grains, or other merchandise.

There are records in the National Archives (Foreign Despatch, Secret Committee, 24th November 1876) which show that at a particular stage it was apprehended that Saran will completely slip out of the hands of the British. The Commissioner, Patna Division, had suggested a request to Nepal Darbar to send 2,000 troops to hold Saran and Champaran. Before the request had been actually conveyed to Nepal Darbar the Resident at Nepal had anticipated the situation and deputed 1,000 Goorkha troops. The Goorkhas were deployed under different Regiments and fully utilised to hold Saran, Champaran, Gorakhpur and other districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Indo-Nepal Relationship.

As the district of Saran comprised the present district of Champaran till 1866 and Champaran was closely connected with the independent territory of Nepal at the border it is necessary to briefly indicate a few facts. The Resident of Nepal was in close touch with the Magistrate of Saran because of his contact with the areas in Champaran. The title of Maharaja Bahadur was conferred on Nawal Kishore Singh of Bettiah in 1844. The title was conferred in a public Darbar by the Commissioner of Patna on the 15th November 1844. It appears that the Resident at Nepal had some hands in getting the title conferred. The Resident at Nepal in his letter no. 112, dated November 2, 1842, Foreign Political Consultation, 25th November, nos. 31—35, had informed the Officiating Secretary, Foreign Department, Government of India, that the Bettiah Raja had been extremely helpful to the Resident and that during the past five years large batches of troops had passed through Bettiah and their demands for supplies, etc., had been made by the Bettiah Raja. The Bettiah Raja had also fixed up a house for

Col. Bradshaw, Resident at Sugauli and had allowed the buildings and lands to be used for the purposes of Nepal Residency. In 1857 when Rana Jang Bahadur moved down through Bettiah with his troops to the aid of the British, the Maharaja of Bettiah made all arrangements for safe passage of the Nepalese army and for their supplies. From Foreign Secret Consultation, 25th September, nos. 115-116, it appears that the Secretary to the Government of Bengal in his no. 1502, dated the 30th August 1857, had reported to the Secretary to the Government of India that the Commissioner of Patna be informed that the district of those provinces to the north of the Ganges were exposed to great danger in consequence of the occupation of Gorakhpur by the rebels. He further mentioned that there were no troops at the disposal of the British Government to oppose the advance of the rebels into Saran and Champaran districts and it was suggested that if His Lordship in his Council see fit the Resident of Nepal may move to procure a march of 1,000 Gurkhas to guard Champaran and a like number for the protection of stations at Chapra and Muzaffarpur. The Secretary to the Foreign Department in his letter no. 3620, dated the 8th September 1857, informed the Secretary to the Government of Bengal that the Resident at Nepal had anticipated the matter and 1,000 Gurkhas had already been sent to Sugauli and Motihari to enable the Magistrate of Champaran to hold the district. The Maharaja of Bettiah had also tried to do his best to help the British Government. He had sent 200 of his own men to surprise a band of rebels who were at a place called Chintaman in the heart of Nepal Raja's jungles and he gave this information to the officer of the Yeomanry Cavalry. There are also other letters in the National Archives showing that the Maharaja of Bettiah was trying his utmost to capture the rebels and help in supplies for the Yeomanry Cavalry who were in the pursuit of the rebels.

The District Magistrate of Saran and the Local Magistrate of Champaran had to be alert about the boundary disputes between Nepal and the district of Saran which included Champaran. There are documents showing that Mr. Yule, *Thikadar* of Ramnagar in Champaran, made bitter complaints in April, 1854, that the Nepalese had taken possession of portions of Ramnagar. Such alleged encroachments used to be promptly looked into by the authorities at both the end. Resident Lawrence appeared to have taken interest in the matter and impressed on the Government of Nepal on the necessity of a careful relaying of the boundary. He had some controversial *chowkis* removed much inside Nepal. He further requested the Magistrate of Champaran to prevent any new *chowkis* being established until the boundary is inspected.

As there were similar complaints from Purnea and Tirhut and many of the boundary marks were found to have been removed or had fallen down or inundated the necessity of re-surveying and relaying of the boundary was fully realised. The Magistrates were

asked to make minute inspection of the boundary pillars and the countryside on the boundary. The Secretary to the Government of Bengal was ultimately requested by the Foreign Department, Fort William that the Governor-General in Council be requested to make necessary arrangements before the cold season for appointing a Commissioner and a Surveyor to lay down the frontier line and to settle the boundary disputes between Nepal and the *Zillahs* of Champaran, Tirhut and Purnea.

The earliest postal communication with Nepal with India ran through Champaran. It appears that the *dak* line from Sugauli to Kathmandu was established for the sole purpose of keeping up the correspondence with the Resident at Nepal and its establishments. There used to be a Postmaster at Sugauli and Motihari particularly for the Nepal *dak*. Apart from postal runners *banghy* parcels used to be sent by *banghy* carriers. Route from Sugauli to Kathmandu ran through Moorla, Raghunathpur, Chapkalia, Tajpur and Semrabassa and after a few other *dak chowkis* at Bhimphedi, Chitlong, Thankot and then to Kathmandu. The document in the National Archives, New Delhi, shows that the Resident at Kathmandu occasionally used to address the Motihari Postmaster direct and the Director-General of Post Offices at India had to ask the Postmaster at Motihari to adhere to his orders and arrangements and not to carry out the Resident's orders.

The exports from Nepal through Champaran were *ghee*, edible grain, wax, spices, etc., while the imports were edible grain, wheat, metals, cotton, etc. The trade was carried mainly through pack ponies, head-loads and carts. There used to be an excise duty but the duty was very light and practically had no effect. The route entering Nepal territory near Kutkenwa in Champaran was very important as a trade route.

Separation of Champaran.

Till 1866 the present district of Champaran was a part of Saran district. A Magistrate, however, had been stationed at Motihari since 1837. After Champaran district was separated from Saran the district limit has had no major changes excepting in the *Diara* area. A riverain district has its local problem of some small changes owing to the fluvial action of the border rivers. When the rivers are in flood they form one sheet of water but after the flood they run into separate channels and this causes a certain amount of administrative problem to the district of Saran as well as to the districts of Shahabad in Bihar and Balia in Uttar Pradesh. As a result, occasionally some villages from one district have to be transferred to another for the time being.

Famine.

In an agricultural country like Saran famine has proved a great scourage to the people. The district had witnessed a series of severe

famines in 1770, 1783, 1866, 1874 and 1897. There had also been certain periods of acute scarcity condition within the last two decades.

Subsequent Administrative History.

After the movement of 1857—1859 the district had remained on the whole quiet. In 1861 the police powers of the zamindars were abolished and the administration of police throughout the local jurisdiction of the Magistrate of the district was vested in the District Superintendent of Police under the general control and direction of the Magistrate. But the District Magistrate was not expected to interfere in the internal organisation and discipline of the police force. The comparative peace and security encouraged the British administrator to extend education and public health measures in the interior. In 1879 Gopalganj Subdivision was sanctioned by the Government. Siwan Subdivision had been created earlier in 1848. The establishment of municipalities at Chapra, Revelganj and Siwan in 1864, 1876 and 1869, respectively, marked the growth of local self-government within the district. The first railway line was constructed between 1881—1884. A District Board was established in 1886 under the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885.

Social Reforms.

The second half of the nineteenth century was marked by a strong wave of renaissance throughout India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and others had raised their voice against various existing social evils, like restrictions of caste system, marriage and education. The Brahmo Samaj founded earlier by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati have rightly been described as the fore-runners of a period of renaissance. Saran district was also fully affected by this movement. The introduction of the occidental system of education in preference to oriental type of education through tols and *maktabs* had far reaching effects.

In his autobiography, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, First President of India Republic who comes from the district of Saran, has mentioned that sea-voyage was discouraged and held with a certain amount of contempt in Saran even as late as 1904. A few years before Dr. Sachchidanand Sinha had returned from England after being called to the Bar. Mr. Sinha was asked to do penance for being taken back to his caste, the caste elders took it that he had committed a sin by crossing the seas. Mr. Sinha refused to do so. But the immediate effect was that students for a few years did not dare go abroad for fear of social ostracism. Rajendra Prasad had to abandon the idea of going to England to sit for the I. C. S. Examination. Dr. Ganesh Prasad of Balia district had his mother's place in Saran. Dr. Ganesh Prasad returned home in 1904 after obtaining his Tripos from England in Mathematics. Rajendra Prasad, his elder brother, Mahendra Prasad and two other co-villagers went to Balia and stayed with Dr. Ganesh Prasad for a couple of days. Within a week there was a public

meeting at Chapra, the headquarters of Saran, where the young men who had dined with Ganesh Prasad were named and ex-communicated. It mattered little to Rajendra Prasad and his brother who were studying in Calcutta but the effect was drastic on the two other young men. They were turned out from their hostel and no hotel would accept them. One of them had to give up his studies.

The Annual Kayastha Conferences had a firm grip throughout North India and Saran was no exception. The Kayastha Conference had started since 1884, a year before the First Session of the Indian National Congress. Although the old guards were orthodox in their views the young generation had brought in ideas which were eroding the citadel. There was a wide agitation against the payment of *Tilak* a forced monetary payment by the bride's party before marriage was fixed. The Hindus and particularly the Kayastha families used to spend lavishly on ceremonial occasions which brought in a high incidence of indebtedness. Moonshee Pearee Lall raised his voice against reducing the high expenditure. His life was even threatened because he wanted to change the social custom. Educational reforms were also in the programme of the Kayastha Conferences.

The Saran branch of the Arya Samaj in the first decade of the twentieth century was carefully nursed by Baijnath Prasad, a school teacher, Pandit Ambica Dutt Vyas and others. The *Gorakshani* movement had also a great hold on the villages. The average well-to-do family in the village used to set apart a palmful of rice everyday which used to be sold and the proceeds utilised for the maintenance of the *Gosalas*. This was known as the *Muthia* system.

Rajendra Prasad, Sachchidanand Sinha, Mahesh Narayan, Nand Kishore Lal and others who were intimately connected with Saran took an active interest and organised the Bihari Students' Association and Conference. The first Conference was held in Patna in 1906 and through Rajendra Prasad's influence quite a large number from Saran district participated. Since then the Conference used to meet every year and the Bhagalpur Sessions in 1917 was presided over by Gandhiji who broke away from Champaran for a few days. Another reformist force was supplied by the Bihar Provincial Conference which was two years younger than the Students' Conference. Here also Rajendra Prasad, Braj Kishore Prasad, Mahesh Narayan, Sachchidanand Sinha and others had a great part to play. As a matter of fact, the Bihar Provincial Conference had passed the resolution of Non-Co-operation earlier than the Indian National Congress. Both the Students' Conference and the Bihar Provincial Conference had social reforms along with political reforms as their objectives.

The Anti-Purdah Movement in Bihar had been started by Braj Kishore Prasad who was closely associated with Saran district. This movement started as a result of Gandhiji's visit to Champaran in 1917.

In the course of his work in connection with the Indigo Movement in Champaran district Gandhiji started a series of schools in the interior and some of them were put in charge of ladies who had joined Gandhiji's camp from outside Bihar. This contact gave rise to the idea of the Anti-Purdah Movement in Bihar. The fruit is seen today when there is a girls' college in Chapra and a large number of girls' schools scattered throughout the district. Co-education is a common feature in the educational institutions.

Political Movement.

The reformist movement both in the social and political fields referred to earlier made the progress of the political movement from the first decade of the twentieth century smoother. From the very early days of the Indian National Congress founded in 1885 Bihar was associated with it. Some of the sponsors of the Bihar Provincial Conference that started its career from nearabout 1904 took an active interest in the affairs of the Indian National Congress. It is a remarkable fact that although Bihar was a part of the province of Bengal a separate Provincial Congress Committee was allowed to be formed in Bihar in 1906 and this separate committee actively functioned. This was more or less due to the enthusiasm of men like Rajendra Prasad, Sachchidanand Sinha, Mahesh Narain and others. Some of them had become the leaders of the youth movement and as mentioned earlier had organised the Bihar Students' Conference which started holding its session annually from 1906. The association of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Indian Republic, with the Congress commences from 1906 when he joined the Calcutta session as a volunteer. From 1906 to 1910 Rajendra Prasad was associated with the Congress but not vitally. Through his influence some persons from Saran district used to attend the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress. In 1911 he became a delegate from Bihar and a member of the All-India Congress Committee and since then Rajendra Prasad's association with the Indian National Congress has been intimate and forceful and due to his influence the Congress movement in Bihar and particularly in Saran district became a force. The Congress session at Lucknow in December 1916 was joined by Gandhiji who had just returned from South Africa a few months before. Rajendra Prasad had attended the Lucknow session but he did not have any direct touch with Gandhiji and there was not even a casual talk between them. It was at this session that one Raj Kumar Shukla, a sturdy peasant from Champaran, met Gandhiji and requested him to move a resolution regarding the troubles of the indigo cultivators in the hands of the European planters. Gandhiji refused as he did not have any direct knowledge of the problem. Braj Kishore Prasad who was also intimately connected with Saran district and a close associate of Rajendra Prasad in the reformist movement in Bihar moved this resolution. Raj Kumar Shukla extracted a promise from Gandhiji that he would visit Champaran and in

fulfilment of this promise Gandhiji came to Motihari in 1917. It is at Motihari that Rajendra Prasad had met Gandhiji for the first time.

By this time a number of young men from Bihar like Maulana Mazharul Haq, Dharnidhar, Ram Nawami Prasad, Hassan Imam, Shri Krishna Sinha, Anugrah Naraın Sinha and Sayed Mahmood had been closely associated with the Indian National Congress.

Delegates from Bihar used to attend the Indian National Congress from the very early years. The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal from 1905 had its repercussions in Bihar and the district of Saran was affected as well. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. S. K. Sinha and late Dr. A. N. Sinha who were students in Calcutta during these momentous years had thrown themselves heart and soul in the movement. The Swadeshi Movement had its ancillary in a bomb-cult followed by the revolutionary wing of the nationalists. It is common knowlege that many of the revolutionaries and their agents had percolated to the different districts of Bihar and helped in organising anti-British ideas. There was a time in 1906—1908 when every Bengali getting down at the railway stations of Saran district was shadowed by the C. I. D. men.

At that time there was a great move by the indigo cultivators not to grow indigo at the bid of the European planters because it was uneconomic. The *Amlas* of the planters were also very oppressive. This movement had its repercussion in Saran district as well. In 1908 there was an attempt to kill Mr. Kingsford, District and Sessions Judge of Muzaffarpur, by two Bengali boys for his cruel convictions when he was the Judge at Alipore in Bengal. By mistake, a bomb was thrown on the carriage which was supposed to be Mr. Kingsford's and the occupants Mrs. and Miss Kennedy, the wife and daughter of a local counsel were killed. One of the boys, Prafulla Chaki was arrested and shot himself dead. The other boy, Khudi Ram Bose, was arrested, tried and hanged at Muzaffarpur. The episode created a sensation all over Bihar and Saran was also very much affected.

A separate commissionership known as Tirhut Division comprising the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga was created in the year of the execution of Khudi Ram Bose (1908). In 1912 the province of Bihar and Orissa was separated from Bengal. The next important incident which affected Bihar and the district of Saran was the visit of Gandhiji to Champaran in 1917. The field had already been prepared and it was no wonder that the batch of workers with Gandhiji from outside Bihar were quickly joined by Rajendra Prasad, Mazharul Haq, Shambhu Sharan, Anugraha Narain Sinha, Braj Kishore Prasad, Ram Nawami Prasad and others. The technique of non-violence and non-co-operation of Gandhiji won this historical struggle and the miseries of the indigo cultivators were removed by an Act. During Gandhiji's stay in Champaran district he could snatch away a few days to pay a visit

to Gopalganj in Saran district where he held a mass meeting. Throughout his stay over six months in Champaran district he used to be visited by hundreds of men from Saran district with their grievances and requested to visit Saran. The Champaran visit of Ghandhiji had a great political and social effect in Saran district. In the social field an Anti-*Purdah* Movement in Saran district was sponsored by Braj Kishore Prasad.

The later political history of Saran follows the trends that were common for the whole of India. The first Great War of 1914—1918 had its effect. A large number of Biharis and particularly from Saran well-noted for martial spirit had joined the war at a critical moment. There were great expectations but the Montagu Chelmsford's Reform proposals published in July, 1918, were felt to be extremely inadequate. The subsequent incidents came rapidly one after another. The Rowlatt Act, Jallianwalabagh incident at Amritsar and the horrors that were committed in the name of Martial Law in the Punjab created unrest and frustration throughout India. The Muslims had resented the humiliating terms offered to Turkey and organised a mass *Khilafat* Movement which for a pretty long time worked in close co-operation with the Congress. In alliance with the *Khilafat* leaders, Gandhiji started the great Non-Co-operation Movement in 1929 based on strictly non-violence principles. Bihar received a close attention from Gandhiji and the first batch of the Congress leaders of All-India importance. A big meeting was organised at Darauli in the district of Saran on the eve of *Kartik Purnima Mela* under the leadership of Dr. Rajendra Prasad who had thrown away his lucrative practice as an advocate in the Patna High Court at the call of Gandhiji. From that moment Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the uncrowned king of Bihar and had a large hand in shaping modern Bihar. In the wake of this movement Maulana Mazharul Haq had constructed an *Ashram* on the Patna-Dinapore Road which subsequently became the famous Sadaqat Ashram, the headquarters of the State Branch of Indian National Congress. The National College at the initiation of the Non-Co-operation Movement was located at Sadaqat Ashram. The Non-Co-operation Movement was nursed in full vigour in Bihar and the contribution of Saran district was quite considerable.

The appointment of Simon Commission with non-Indian members to draw up a blue print of future India was boycotted. Dr. Rajendra Prasad again gave the leadership to this boycott movement. When Simon Commission visited Patna there was a great assembly of people including hundreds from Saran district at the Patna Railway Station with black flags and a full-throated slogan " Simon go back ".

The next phase of the Non-Co-operation Movement known as the Civil Disobedience Movement initiated by Gandhiji in April, 1930, was fully implemented in Saran district. In connection with

the *Satyagraha* Movement sponsored by Gandhiji a whirlwind tour of the different parts of Bihar was done by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. One of the famous meetings he addressed was at Maharajganj. Sometime after Dr. Rajendra Prasad was arrested in Chapra and sent to Hazaribagh Central Jail. After the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931 the *Satyagraha* was called off though peaceful picketting was allowed for *Swadeshi* purposes. The Non-Co-operation Movement in all its phases had always received the fullest support from the district of Saran. This was, more or less, due to the constant tours of Dr. Rajendra Prasad and his followers throughout the district. One impact of Dr. Rajendra Prasad's visit to the interior may be mentioned. The village Chakia, police-station Bhorey was notorious as a village of criminals. This village was visited by Dr. Rajendra Prasad in 1926 and he spent a day there. The result was seen in 1930 when hundreds from this village went to jail. Boycott of foreign goods in the villages had been pushed up to an extreme end and even kerosene oil was completely boycotted for some time. The village Panchayat system stood very well introduced for some time and the number of cases going to the courts had a distinct fall.

Another important event was the great Bihar Earthquake of 1934. Saran was not so badly affected as some of the districts of Bihar like Monghyr, Champaran and Muzaffarpur. A Bihar Central Relief Committee was formed with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as Chairman and worked in close co-operation with the Provincial Government of Bihar and Orissa. From the election of 1935 the district of Saran has shown her pro-Congress trends. In all the elections since 1935 the Congress Party's nominees have been the majority of the successful candidates This district has closely followed the dictates of All-India Congress Committee and in the chaotic days of 1942 on the wake of the Quit India Movement many of the local leaders of Saran district played their part manfully courting arrests, working underground and suffering great hardships. At many places the police and the magistracy had to open fire and made mass arrest. The communal outburst in 1946 unfortunately had its repercussion in this district as well. A number of Muslims had left the district for Pakistan. The formation of the Interim Ministry in 1946 had to tackle this great problem. In 1947 came the Independence for India as a Republic.

We are far too close to the momentous event of the attainment of independence and a correct appraisal of the contribution of Saran district may not be quite objective. We may, however, mention at one place a few persons of Saran district who played an important role. They are Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Mazharul Haq, Shri Mahendra Prasad, Dr. Sayyad Mahmud, Shri Jai Prakash Narain and Shri Jaglal Chaudhury. There are other local leaders as well. A brief reference has already been made to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Mazharul Haq and Shri Mahendra Prasad. Dr. Sayyad

Mahmud closely followed the footsteps of his father-in-law, Maulana Mazharul Haq. He was twice a Minister in the Bihar Cabinet after independence. He was later elected Member of Parliament. Shri Jai Prakash Narain, another all-India figure comes from Sitabdiara. Receiving the early training and education in the States he has been in the forefront of the Indian politics for several decades. He was once an active member of the Indian National Congress and was imprisoned in 1942. His subsequent escape from Hazaribagh Central Jail and remaining underground for a considerable period had sent a stir throughout India. Saran district being his homeland was particularly agitated on his escape from the jail. He became a member of the Socialist Party and is now actively engaged in *Bhudan* work as a very close collaborator of Vinoba Bhave. Shri Jaglal Chaudhury, a leader coming from the Harijan community had given up his studies in the Calcutta Medical College to join the Non-Co-operation Movement. His son was shot dead in the course of the movement. He took a great interest in trying to implement prohibition in Saran district when he was Excise Minister. He still continues to be a member of the Legislative Assembly. Some of the other men of the district who had actively collaborated with Dr. Rajendra Prasad in the Congress Movement from the very beginning are Sri Ram Udar Singh (Rahul Sankirtayan), Sri Jiteu Ram, Sri Mahendra Singh, Sri Girish Tiwari and Sri Mathura Prasad who had been the Private Secretary of Dr. Rajendra Prasad as long as he was alive.

The later events refer to administrative history and have been covered in the text of different chapters. The most important recent landmark is the abolition of zamindary. This district had several old aristocratic zamindar families like Hathua, Manjha and Bettiah, etc. The other administrative changes have been covered in the chapter on General Administration.

CHAPTER III.

THE PEOPLE.

Growth of Population.

As mentioned elsewhere "*Sarkar Saran*", as the district was known in the early days of British administration, consisted of the present Saran and Champaran districts. Champaran was separated as a district in 1866. Saran district was originally a part of Patna Division and continued as such till 1908 when Tirhut Division was created consisting of a few districts on the north of the river Ganga.

The district of Saran has now three subdivisions, namely, the Sadar subdivision consisting of twelve thanas; Siwan subdivision consisting of nine thanas; and Gopalganj subdivision with seven thanas. The subdivision of Siwan was sanctioned in 1848 while that of Gopalganj was sanctioned by the Government in 1875.

Regarding the growth of population it may be mentioned that there was an Experimental Census in 1869 in the Lower Provinces of Bengal. The report of this Experimental Census of the population by H. Baverely was published from Alipore Jail Press, Calcutta, in 1870. This Experimental Census coming as it did almost immediately after Champaran was separated and just before the first Regular Census in 1872 has a certain importance in spite of the fact that the figures cannot be expected to be anything more than approximately accurate. This was so as the technique of conducting the census was rather crude and the work was entirely of pioneer nature. It may further be mentioned that the first Experimental Census was postponed for a short time owing to apprehension of severe famine in Bihar and could only take place after a few months. In Baverely's report it is mentioned that the Commissioner did not consider the returns to be very trustworthy. But certain data are of particular interest. Revelganj which is a minor township now appears to have been an important town in 1869. Gopalganj which is now the headquarters of the subdivision was a petty village consisting of 110 souls. Basantpur which is an important village now had a population of 1,068 souls while Masrakh had a population of 3,407. The largest town in the district was, as could be expected, Chapra, which had 45,069 souls. Revelganj had a population of 11,968, while Maharajganj followed with 10,084 souls.

The population statement of a number of places in Saran in 1869 census is given below :—

POPULATION STATEMENT (1869).

Names of places.	No. of houses.	Adults.			Children.			Total population.
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	
Saran—								
Chapra	.	15,224	15,442	30,666	7,861	6,542	14,403	45,069
Revelganj	..	4,142	4,595	8,737	2,202	1,029	3,231	11,968
Goldenganj	..	186	279	465	120	88	208	673
Manjhi	..	1,405	1,721	3,126	905	629	1,534	4,660
Maharajganj	..	890	1,013	1,903	564	376	940	2,843
Siwan	..	3,446	3,438	6,884	1,787	1,413	3,200	10,084
Kanti	..	1,221	1,233	2,454	687	502	1,189	3,643
Mirganj	..	791	762	1,553	431	238	669	2,222
Hathwa . ..	.	1,192	684	1,876	346	261	607	2,483
Gopalganj . ..	..	273	313	586	192	132	324	910
Basantpur	..	343	368	711	215	142	357	1,068
Masrakh	.	938	1,161	2,099	723	585	1,308	3,407
Hashimpur	..	1,029	1,191	2,220	572	477	1,049	3,269
Andar	..	579	662	1,241	396	299	695	1,936
Amnaur	..	816	1,000	1,816	488	314	802	2,618
Dighwara	..	1,581	1,661	3,242	908	463	1,371	4,613

Some statistical references of Saran are also mentioned in the *East Indian Gazetteer* by Walter Hamilton published in 1815, a copy of which is available in the National Library, Calcutta. From Walter Hamilton's *East Indian Gazetteer* we find that at the instance of Marquis Wellesley, the then Governor-General, the Board of Revenue in Bengal had circulated various questions on statistical subject and the result of their replies showed that Saran contained 12,04,000 inhabitants. Of course, Saran included the district of Champaran as well.

Regarding the subsequent growth of population the following quotation from the previous *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) is of interest :—"The first census was taken in 1872 and the result was to show, for the present district areas, total population of 20,76,640 persons. At the next census taken in 1881, the number had risen to 22,95,207, representing an increase of 10½ per cent, but this is partly attributed to improved enumeration, as it is believed that the first census was wanting in accuracy and completeness. During the next decade also the population grew steadily, and in 1891 the number of inhabitants enumerated was 24,65,007 or 7.4 per cent more than in 1881. At the census of 1901, it was found that the population had decreased to 24,09,509 or by 2.2 per cent. This decrease was attributed to four causes, the famine of 1897, a consequent reduction in the birth-rate, plague and emigration. In 1911 the total population was 22,89,778, a further decrease of 4.97 per cent, due to a great increase in mortality, the average death-rate for the decade being 40.5 per mille while in the preceding nine years it was under 30 per mille. Plague was partly responsible for this increase and also a virulent type of fever which was prevalent in 1903, 1905, 1909 and 1910. There was also a further increase in emigration, and a decrease in immigration, so that the decrease of nearly 5 per cent in actual population tends to exaggerate the true facts.

"At the last census of 1921 an upward movement was again visible, the total population being 23,39,953, an increase of 2.21 per cent. This increase was distributed equally over the three subdivisions, it occurred in every thana and was most marked in Manjhi which was the greatest loser in 1911. In the decade preceding the census of 1921 the district enjoyed a period of comparatively good health, and plague lost its virulence. It is noteworthy that the net gain of 50,523 is due entirely to the increase in the males, females being fewer by 17,560. There has also been a large decrease in the number of emigrants which more than accounts for the increase in the actual population; this increase has occurred chiefly among the males of the labouring classes from which emigrants are drawn in large numbers and consequently the increase in population does not mean that the pressure on the soil is still increasing".

From 1921 onwards the growth of population in Saran has shown an upward tendency. The 1921—1930 decade was not favourable as there were epidemics of fever, cholera and plague in 1921. But the remaining nine years were normal. The census of 1931 recorded a total population of 24,86,737 which showed an increase of 1,46,515 or 6.3 per cent over the 1921 total.

The incidence of public health remained satisfactory throughout the next decade (1931—1940). The census of 1941 recorded the total population of 28,60,537 or a net increase of 3,73,800 or 15 per cent over the 1931 total. It is also remarkable that during the enumeration of 1941 census the female population had shown an increase of 16.5 per cent in spite of the fall recorded in 1921 while the male population showed an increase of 12.6 per cent. The growth of population was due in the main to the natural increase.

In the first half of 1941—1950, public health in Saran appears to have been worse than at any time during the preceding ten or fifteen years. Cholera appeared in 1943, 1944 and 1945 and the average annual mortality from Cholera during 1941—1950 was 3,153 as compared with only 590 in the previous decade. Fever also took a heavy toll particularly in 1944—1945, Cholera appeared in epidemic form also in 1947 and 1948 when there was also increase in the incidence of plague which took an epidemic form in 1946 and 1947. The rest of the three years were free from epidemics. The population in 1951 census was 31,55,144 which meant an increase of 2,94,607 or 10.3 per cent over the 1941 total. Due to spread of epidemics the pace of the growth of population was less in 1951 than in the census of 1941.

The following statement shows variation in the population of the district since 1901 as mentioned in the *District Census Hand-Book for Saran*, 1951 :—

Years.	Persons.	Variation.	Males.	Variation.	Females.	Variation.	Percentage net variation.
1901	24,09,365	..	10,95,136	..	13,13,029	..	—2.3
1911	22,89,699	—1,19,666	10,64,426	—31,010	12.25,273	—88,654	—4.9
1921	23,40,222	+50,523	11,32,509	+68,083	12,07,713	—17,560	+2.21
1931	24,86,737	+1,46,515	12,20,203	+87,694	12,66,534	+58,821	+6.3
1941	28,60,537	+3,73,800	13,74,154	+1,53,951	14,86.383	+2,10,849	+15.00
1951	31,55,144	+2,94,607	15,01,253	+1,27,099	16,53,891	+1,67,508	+10.3

In 1951 census the following overall population figures subdivisionwise were recorded :—

Name of subdivision.		Male	Female.	Total.
Sadar	..	5,89,277	6,67,029	12,56,306
Siwan	..	5,07,969	5,68,015	10,75,984
Gopalganj	..	4,04,007	4,18,847	8,22,834

The 1951 census population according to revenue thana is given below :—

Revenue thanas.		Persons.	Males.	Females.
(1) Chapra	..	4,56,548	2,14,064	2,42,484
(2) Manjhi	..	1,70,806	77,059	93,747
(3) Parsa	..	3,16,836	1,51,565	1,65,071
(4) Masarakh	..	1,96,484	90,950	1,05,534
(5) Sonepur	..	1,15,832	55,639	60,193
(6) Basantpur	..	3,60,172	1,67,309	1,92,863
(7) Siwan	..	4,22,862	2,01,468	2,21,394
(8) Darauli	..	2,92,950	1,39,192	1,53,758
(9) Mirganj	.	4,57,416	2,24,519	2,32,897
(10) Gopalganj	..	3,65,438	1,79,488	1,85,950

DENSITY.

The census figures indicate an upward tendency in the incidence of density of the population per square mile in Saran district. In 1921 the density was 877 persons per square mile and this went up to 932 and 1,072 in 1931 and 1941, respectively. According to census of 1951, this district with a pressure of 1,182 persons to one square mile had the highest density in the State of Bihar. This incidence could be compared with the neighbouring district of Muzaffarpur which had the highest density in the State in 1941 with a pressure of 1,077 persons to one square mile as against 1,167 persons in 1951.

Siwan is the most densely populated thana with 1,565 persons to the square mile. Guthni and Kateya are the only police-stations with less than 900 persons to the square mile, the incidence of density being 693 and 896 to the square mile, respectively. It will be of some interest to note here that in the Final Report of the Survey and Settlement (1903) it was observed that excepting Gopalganj the limit of population had been reached and it was a matter of congratulation that emigration was growing in favour.

The incidence of density of each thana is shown below in a tabular form :—

Name of the thana.	Area in square mile.	Population. in 1951.	Density.
(1) Chapra town ..	7	64,309	9,187
(2) Siwan ..	160	2,45,111	1,565
(3) Siswan ..	37	56,819	1,536
(4) Ekma ..	54	81,494	1,509
(5) Raghunathpur ..	45	67,389	1,498
(6) Marhowrah .	113	1,58,862	1,406
(7) Baniapur ..	84	1,16,731	1,385
(8) Barharia ..	70	91,979	1,314
(9) Maharajganj ..	107	1,40,345	1,308
(10) Basantpur ..	169	2,19,827	1,301
(11) Garkha ..	64	78,290	1,223
(12) Mirganj ..	143	1,71,043	1,198
(13) Mairwa ..	72	85,772	1,191
(14) Sonepur ..	67	76,779	1,146
(15) Barauli ..	91	1,02,235	1,129
(16) Mashrakh ..	174	1,96,484	1,129
(17) Kuchaikot ..	94	1,01,706	1,082
(18) Gopalganj ..	155	1,62,718	1,050
(19) Chapra Mufasil	150	1,57,332	1,046
(20) Parsa ..	152	1,57,774	1,038
(21) Manjhi ..	89	89,312	1,003
(22) Darauli ..	128	1,26,447	988
(23) Bhore ..	111	1,06,516	962
(24) Baikunthpur .	105	1,00,485	956
(25) Dighwara .	42	39,053	930
(26) Katia ..	87	78,151	896
(27) Revelganj .	47	39,886	846
(28) Guthni ..	61	42,295	693

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION.

It has been remarked that the people of Saran district could be practically found in all the States of India. It is true that the incidence of emigration is quite high in this district and the people are also by nature quite adventurous and would not hesitate to emigrate, if necessary.

Emigration affords relief to the pressure on the soil. Much of the emigration is seasonal occurring about the end of November and lasting for three or four months. The volume of emigration in Saran is greater than the other districts of the State. O'Malley, the Superintendent of Census Operations, 1911, thought that for emigration racial characteristic was part of the explanation, and in support of this view he has drawn attention and quoted the following

observations of Dr. Sir George Grierson regarding the character of the Bhojpuri People of Western Bihar :—

"an active and alert nationality, with few.... and considerable abilities. Dearly loving a fight for fighting's sake, they have spread all over Aryan India, each man ready to carve his fortune out of any opportunity which may present itself to him. As fond as an Irishman of a stick, the long-boned stalwart Bhojpuri, with his staff in hand, is a familiar object striding far from his home. Thousands of them have emigrated to British colonies and have returned rich-men; every year still large numbers wander over Northern Bengal seek employment........ Calcutta,............ is full of them".

With the present density and the exclusive agricultural economy of the district if the people do not go out of the district they will starve or create other administrative troubles.

The emigration figures of 1921 and 1951 will be of some interest. In 1921 census 1,47,854 males and 62,036 females were enumerated outside the district. In round figures 1,14,000 were found in Bengal (chiefly in Calcutta and 24 Parganas), 28,000 in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh), 18,000 in Assam and 2,000 in Burma. During the census of 1931, 29,000 males and 18,000 females were found outside the district. The round figures are not given in the Census Report of 1931. The falling off in emigration in 1931 is attributed principally to two factors : (1) acute industrial depression in Bengal which compelled many emigrants to return home, and (2) favourable economic conditions in the district. Migration statistics were not compiled at the 1941 census but it is presumed that a large number of persons went out of the district as recruits to war services or sought work elsewhere. The outbreak of the Second World War also provided a great opportunity for employment outside the district. As mentioned before the circumstances in Saran up to 1947 were not favourable owing to the spread of epidemics. There would have been a vast number of emigration but horror of war due to the occupation of Burma and Singapur by Japan and imminent danger to the eastern part of the country checked the flow of emigration. The figures of emigration from individual districts to other States of India were not compiled at the 1951 census. The Census Report, 1951 (Volume V, Bihar, Part I Report) only gives the number of persons born in the district and enumerated outside. The number of emigrants within the State comes to 67,266 or 213 per thousand of general population. The corresponding figures mentioned in the said report for 1921 were 45,998 within the State and 1,64,163 outside the State. This information is also not available in 1931 and 1941 censuses. Since 1921, there has been substantial decrease in the volume of emigration from Chotanagpur and South Bihar Plain Divisions, but emigration from North Bihar Plain to other provinces appears to have increased. No approximately correct figures for the State could be arrived. It may be near about two lakhs.

The volume of immigration in Saran is much smaller as would be expected and is mainly casual. The number of immigrants in the census of 1921 was 44,796 as against 50, 306 in 1931. The volume of immigration in 1951 comes down to 41,917 or 133 per 10,000 of general population as against 202 per 10,000 in 1931 census. Regarding immigration the Census Report, 1951, mentions that " In Saran and Muzaffarpur which send out a large number of emigrants, the number of immigrants is only 1.3 and 1.7 per cent respectively of the total population ".

The detailed figures of immigration are as follows :—

Divisions, State or country where born with the State.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Patna Division	6,502	2,657	3,845
Tirhut Division (excluding Saran)	14,572	3,794	10,778
Bhagalpur Division	946	305	641
Chotanagpur Division	212	79	133
State, etc., in India beyond the State	19,291	5,461	13,830
Countries in Asia beyond India ..	376	164	212
Countries in Europe	16	14	2
Countries in America	2	2	..
Total	41,917	12,476	29,441

Urban and Rural Population.

W. W. Hunter in the *Statistical Account of Bengal* (Volume XI), published in 1877 had mentioned that " with the exception of the three municipalities of Chapra, Siwan and Revelganj the population of Saran is entirely agricultural; the so-called towns are merely large villages or collections of *tolas*, in the midst of which are conducted all the operations of rural life ". His observation more or less still holds good as the population of the district even after the lapse of about eight decades is mainly rural. The urban population in the census of 1951 was 1,26,158 and the urban rural ratio was 1 :24. The distribution of rural and urban population of the last six censuses along with the total population is given below :—

Year.		Total population.	Urban population.	Percentage urban.	Rural population.	Percentage.
1901	..	24,09,365	71,422	2.93	23,37,943	97.7
1911	..	22 89,699	63,179	2 75	22,26,520	97.25
1921	..	23,40,222	62,463	2.65	22,77,759	97.35
1931	..	24,86,737	70,475	2.81	24,16,262	97.19
1941	..	28,60,537	84,171	2.90	27,76,366	97.10
1951	..	31,55,144	1,26,158	4.00	30,28,986	96.00

The accepted classification of towns according to population is as follows :—

Class I	.. ..	1,00,000 and above.
Class II	.. ..	50,000 to 1,00,000.
Class III	.. ..	20,000 to 50,000.
Class IV	.. ..	10,000 to 20,000.
Class V	.. ..	5,000 to 10,000.

The largest town is Chapra with a population of 64,309 according to 1951 census. This is the only Class II town in the district now and there is no Class I town. The index of urbanisation has been somewhat slow as the following figures of population of the different towns in Saran district will show :—

Census year.		Chapra town.	Siwan town.	Revelganj town.
1881	..	51,670	13,319	12,493
1891	..	57,352	17,709	13,473
1901	..	45,901	15,756	9,765
1911	..	42,373	12,472	8,334
1921	..	42,415	11,862	8,186
1931	..	47,448	14,215	8,812
1941	..	55,142	18,386	10,643
1951	..	64,309	22,625	11,321

The Class IV towns emerged in 1951, namely, Gopalganj and Mirganj with a population of 14,213 and 13,690, respectively.

It would be seen that there has been a general decline of the population in all the towns in 1901 and 1911. The reasons were the famines of 1897, epidemics like plague and fever in 1903, 1905, 1909 and 1910.

Chapra, the headquarters of the district, was not only affected by famines and epidemics but also lost its commercial importance owing to the shifting of the rivers Ganga and Gogra. The decline in population of Chapra is partially due to these reasons.

Recently there has been a large number of offices of the State Government at district level opened up at Chapra. There are also two big colleges for boys and other institutions which have attracted a sizeable student population from the mofussils. The educated unemployed of the district naturally flock to the district headquarters in search of employment. The courts, civil and criminal, have enormously expanded. All this have led to growth of the population of Chapra in the recent years. There is no wonder that while 1941 census recorded an increase of about 15 per cent, in 1951 there was an increase of about 16.4 per cent of the population.

The trend of population in Siwan, the next largest town within the district, has also been somewhat similar. The recent additions of one Degree College, a sugar mill, a distillery and a sugar mill at Pachrukhi at a distance of five miles from Siwan have added to the population and helped the urbanisation of the area.

Revelganj, on the river Gogra, was once a much more important place of commercial importance. The Custom House at Revelganj in the nineteenth century controlled the trade to Nepal and through the river up and down to a considerable degree. The main current has now shifted and a decline in river-borne traffic recorded.

The industrial urbanisation in this district is practically nil. The villages that are on the way to be townships are Sonepur, Marhowrah and Maharajganj. Without some industrial concerns the towns cannot have a quick growth.

It has been mentioned before that 96 per cent of the population of the district lives in villages. In the three North Bihar districts, namely, Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, the average density of rural population is well above 1,000 persons per square mile. In Saran it reaches 1,145, Muzaffarpur comes next with 1,133 and Darbhanga is third with 1,085. The number of villages given in the cadastral survey, revisional survey and the different censuses do not tally with one another. It is mentioned in the cadastral survey (1893—1901) that "According to the *Milan Khasra* figures combined with those for villages topographically surveyed, we get a total of 4,863 villages to which must be added two entire villages absorbed in the Chapra Municipality. The average size of a village is only .55 of a square mile, as against .67 in Muzaffarpur and 1.14 in Champaran. The thana average ranges only from .69 in Gopalganj to .41 in Mirganj.

"The largest village in the district is Shitab Diara, measuring nearly 16½ square miles; it is, however, a *diara* village, and excluding it three other *diara* villages of more than 7 square miles each, the largest upland village is Parsa in Manjhi thana, with an area of slightly over 6½ square miles. The smallest village in the district is Bankati in thana Gopalganj with an area of less than an acre and a half. Altogether there are only 218 villages, many of which lie in the *diara* which have an area of more than 1,000 acres and 697 villages ranging between 500 to 1,000 acres; the balance are all under 500 acres in extent." Shitab Diara is still the largest village in the district.

The revisional survey operations (1915—1921) had mentioned 4,682 villages. The census of 1921 recorded 4,341 villages as against 4,305 in 1931, 4,259 in 1941 and 4,285 in 1951. From the field *bhujharat* which has been conducted after the abolition of zamindari, the number of recorded villages comes to 4,891. The reasons for

the variation in the number of villages are as follows: firstly Saran is a riverain district and due to the actions of its three great rivers, the Ganga, Gogra and the Gandak, the river islands are constantly being destroyed and reformed. At one place, the river is cutting into its bank and washing away village sites and groves; at another point the shore is receiving an alluvial deposit to fill up the void left by the receding water. The second valid reason may be the formation and disappearance of the small hamlets and *tolas*. There are some villages which are called "*Bechiragi gawn*" or the village without any light or uninhabited.

The average number of inhabitants in a village according to the census of 1951 comes to 707 as against 524 in 1921, 561 in 1931 and 652 in 1941. The last District Gazetteer published in 1930 mentions that "there had been steady increase in the size of the village since 1872. This tendency has evidently persisted and is due to the value of land being so great that the building of new village is almost an impossibility, and the erection of a new hamlet or *tola* or even of many new houses is no easy task". The observation of Mr. A. P. Middleton still holds good as owing to the heavy pressure on soil there are not enough lands to start new villages.

The drift of rural population towards towns has started but is not appreciable yet. Without industrialisation the towns are not in a position to absorb any sizeable percentage of the rural population. The towns, however, provide modern amenities which are not found in the villages and so they have attracted the rich and moneyed class. The abolition of zamindari led many of the ex-zamindars to settle in towns where they could invest their money in trade and industry. The opening of colleges and sugar mills at Chapra, Siwan and Gopalganj are also responsible for this slight drift.

The imbalance between the amenities and the social standards between the villages and the towns cannot be to the good of the district. The accent has recently been to remove this imbalance through the development projects. The National Extension Service Blocks have a comprehensive programme for an all-round improvement of the villages in selected circles. The idea is that if a group of villages improve, by osmotic process the other villages will also improve.

Displaced Persons.

The heavy density and the close use of the lands in this district do not bear much scope for absorbing any sizeable percentage of the displaced persons due to the problem of partition in 1947. The number of West Pakistan refugees in the census of 1951 in Saran was 288 out of which 201 were males and 87 females. The majority of the West Pakistan displaced persons were non-agriculturists and by nature they were hardy and active. From migration register

maintained in the collectorate office it appears that there were 34 families who entered the district from West Pakistan. Almost all the refugees of the West Pakistan have been rehabilitated in the district and majority of them are now engaged in trade and commerce.

Some displaced persons came to Bihar from East Pakistan during 1948-49, but large-scale movement did not begin until the second quarter of 1950 when there were fresh communal disturbances in East Pakistan. Several thousand displaced persons crossed over the border and entered into the Purnea district; thousands more went to their relatives and friends in different districts of Bihar and 26,176 were brought to Bihar from overcrowded transit camps in West Bengal. The census of 1951 enumerated 1,947 displaced persons of East Pakistan in the district out of which 969 were males and 978 females. The majority of the refugees of the East Pakistan were agriculturists and so the rehabilitation problem in Saran which is agriculturally itself overpopulated, was a bit difficult. Two relief camps—one at Chapra and another at Hathua—were opened for temporary rehabilitation of the displaced persons of East Pakistan. From the figures of the displaced persons received in camps from East Pakistan through official channel it appears that the number of the displaced persons of the East Pakistan were more than enumerated in the census of 1951. The Chapra Relief Camp was opened in 1950 and closed in 1951 and the Hathua Relief Camp which was also opened in 1950 continued till March, 1952. The number of displaced persons in both the camps was 3,663 out of which 989 deserted the camps, 147 were repatriated, 234 died due to natural death and the remaining 2,293 were rehabilitated in the different camps of the State. It appears from the official records that only ten displaced persons of East Pakistan got employment at the district headquarters, Chapra.

The second wave of the displaced persons of East Pakistan were those refugees who were transferred from the Bettiah camp in the Champaran district from 1957 to 1958. The number of such displaced persons is 448 and they have been rehabilitated in the Sripur Rehabilitation Colony. There is a scheme to rehabilitate both the agriculturists and non-agriculturists displaced persons in the district. The displaced persons in Saran district have not created any administrative problem as they have in some other districts of Bihar. The few hundreds of them have been absorbed in the population and have mostly taken to service or profession.

LANGUAGE.

The vernacular spoken all over the district is the *Bhojpuri* dialect of the Bihari language which, according to Grierson's classification, falls into the Eastern group of the outer sub-branch of the Aryan languages as a whole. The *Bhojpuri* is an off-shoot of Eastern Hindi spoken in the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh. It

has been held to be a direct descendant of the old Magadha *Apabhrans*. It takes the name after the pargana Bhojpur in Shahabad and the dialects slightly differ in Saran having a tinge of the dialects spoken in the districts adjoining Saran. Without going into any scholastic discussion one may generally say that the language of Muzaffarpur district to the east of Saran across the river Gandak is western *Maithili*, while the language of Patna district across the river Ganga and opposite the south-east corner is *Magahi*. So far, as might be expected, the language of the east of Saran is affected with *Maithili* peculiarities and that of the south-east with *Magahi*. There are also some local peculiarities, *bate* being used for "*he is*" instead of *bare* in Shahabad, while in the past tense of the verb, *u* is substituted for the *l* which is usually typical of Bihari, e.g., *dekhaue* 'he saw'. *Kayathi* is confined mostly among the *Kayastha* community and for the documents in the courts.

It may also be cursorily mentioned that the Bhojpuri-speaking tract which covers Saran district as well is almost a byword in the Indian Union as the home of a martial race. Bhojpur pargana has been famous for martial activities through different ages and the Bhojpurias were given preference as *Bandukachi* (matchlock-man) during Mughal India. The tract has always been a fruitful source of recruitment for the police and military. The stalwart Bhojpuria with his burly *lathi* (long staff) has been a familier object striding over the field far from his home. Somehow the dialect of Bhojpur has also been taken as virile as the Bhojpuria.

Religion and Caste.

According to census of 1951 the Hindus form 87.8 per cent and Mohamedans 12.17 per cent of the population. The balance comes from the Sikhs, Jains, Christians, etc.

The Hindu population consists of 27,73,529 souls, out of which 13,16,609 are males and 14,56,920 females. Mohamedans account for 3,81,153 souls with 1,84,378 males and 1,96,775 females.

According to 1951 census the number of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes were as follows :—

	Male.	Female.	Total.	Percentage of the total population.
(1) Scheduled Castes ..	1,54,206	1,77,317	3,32,023	10.52
(2) Scheduled Tribes ..	221	231	452	..
(3) Backward Classes ..	1,72,683	1,74,948	3,47,631	11.00

Religions.

Mohamedans are evenly distributed in the district. Their representation is strong in Siwan thana while the Muslim population is lowest in Sonepur revenue thana. In Siwan thana alone the Muslims account for 51,135 souls excluding Siwan proper. In Sonepur revenue thana there are only 6,729 Muslims among 1,09,059 Hindus. The Muslims follow the same profession or occupation like the Hindus.

The last census of 1951 records only 293 Sikhs although the number may have multiplied by now as this small community is very vigorous in extending their occupation and invite their brethren from other parts. The majority of Sikhs in the rural areas reside in Basantpur police-station and mostly engaged in various types of trades and commerce. The number of 64 Jains recorded in the last census appears to be an under-estimate. The majority of Jains belong to the Marwari community and there are quite a few of them in the towns and townships like Chapra, Revelganj, Siwan, Mirganj and Gopalganj. They are engaged in various types of trades and commerce and although a very small minority count a lot in the society as most of them are quite rich. The Christians have been recorded at the small figure of 105 in the last census and this also looks to be an under-estimate. The majority of them are shown to be in Sonepur and Basantpur police-stations. Sonepur Railway Colony has a number of Christian families some of whom are Anglo-Indians. It may be mentioned that the oldest Christian Mission in Saran is the German Evangelical Lutheran Mission which was established in Chapra in 1840. There is also a Roman Catholic Mission at Chapra besides a Protestant Mission at Siwan, named the Regions Beyond Mission. The American Mission has a branch at Chapra which is managed by ladies.

Castes.

There has been no castewise enumeration in the census of 1951. Probably this was not done with a view to discourage caste consciousness but the hold of the caste on Indian life is so deep that for various academic purposes castewise figures would have been quite interesting, particularly because of the impact on the rigours of the caste system. Castes have not become extinct from the district by any means. The traditional division of occupations according to caste has, however, been in the melting pot and untouchability in loosening its hold more by social education than by law.

The last castewise enumeration was done in 1931 census. In 1941 census owing to war exigency this along with many other tables were omitted. As mentioned before castewise enumeration was deliberately dropped in 1951 census. For having an idea of the

numerical strength of the principal castes we have to fall back upon the figures of 1931 census which are given below :—

Principal castes.	Total number.
Bhumihar Brahman	95,422
Bania	3,734
Barhi	19,571
Brahman	1,76,875
Chamar	1,40,763
Dhanuk	19,686
Dhobi	20,899
Dom	7,450
Dosadh	84,460
Goala (Ahir, Gope)	3,32,608
Hajam	35,794
Jolha (Muslim)	99,310
Kahar	11,213
Kamar	50,110
Kayastha	39,487
Koiri	1,68,060
Kumhar	34,507
Kurmi	1,08,512
Rajput	3,51,348
Teli	70,415
Tanti	7,588

A brief note on the principal castes will be of interest not to underline the element of casteism but to show the particular occupational role some of these castes play. Most of the castes follow particular professions. This trend now is on the decline.

BRAHMAN.—The hereditary occupation of Brahmans is priesthood but owing to the changes in the economic trends many of them have taken to cultivation as a means of livelihood while the number of service-holders among the Brahmans is also not negligible. In this district we find a large number of Kanaujia and Sakaldwipi Brahmans. The Kanaujia are sub-divided into Kanaujia proper and Saryupari or Sarvaria. The Saryuparis are considered to be of an inferior status because they are supposed to have left their original native place in Awadh and migrated to the banks of Saryu or Gogra during the time of Rama, and also because they habitually accept alms. But, nevertheless, they have strict scruples regarding ceremonial purity, food and drink and social habits. There is a common proverb "*Tin Kanaujia Terah Chulha*" which means that three Kanaujias will have thirteen cooking places and so very strict they are with their taboos.

BHUMIHAR BRAHMAN.—It is a significant fact that the principal Zamindars of Saran district were of this community. Although Zamindaris have been abolished the role that most of those Zamindar families played in their contribution in the maintenance of schools, colleges, libraries, hospitals, etc., should not be forgotten. The principal Zamindar families were the Maharaja Bahadur of Hathwa, Raja of Chatapur and Babus of Manjhi, Parsa and Khaira. Apart from the Zamindar families the Bhumihar Brahmans, as a class, are well-to-do and substantial cultivators.

RAJPUT.—This community is found scattered practically all over the district and although mainly cultivators quite a good percentage offer themselves for recruitment in the army and in the police. A notable disparity is usually noticed in the previous census tables regarding the number of the sexes and this is due to the fact that quite a good percentage of the male adults go out of the district in search of employment. The Rajputs of Saran district have a martial bearing and have no hesitation to go far from the home village for a job.

KAYASTHA.—Although it may not be very correct to state now that the Kayasthas form the brain trust of the district, there can be no denial that at one time most of the service-holders were recruited from this community. Usually the better classes of the Kayasthas invariably have schooling and for generations have been in the forefront in the leading professions as well. The number of Kayasthas actually tilling the lands for cultivation is very small and they would normally employ ploughmen to do the actual tilling of the soil.

GOALA.—Goalas, also known as Ahirs and Gopes, from the point of numerical strength, rank first and are practically found all over the district. They are, however, most numerous along the banks of Gogra and Gandak probably because the excellent grazing lands near the rivers attracted the Goalas to settle down as their principal occupation was rearing of cattle The number of Goala cultivators is quite large and a good percentage are substantial cultivators. It may be mentioned that the Goalas of Saran district are divided into four sub-castes, Majraut, Kishnaut, Goria and Kanaujia. The Kishnauts prefer a claim of precedence over others on the tradition that Lord Krishna was born in their sub-caste. They are invaluable for the agricultural economy of the district.

KOERIS AND KURMIS.—The Koeris and Kurmis are essentially cultivators and as a class are industrious and peaceful. They form the backbone of the agricultural economy of the district.

BANIA.—As a class Banias are mostly shopkeepers and traders and some of them also carry on money-lending business. This class has not been very much affected by the recent economic trends and continues to be among the moneyed section.

BARHI.—This community is evenly distributed all over the district. The Barhis or the carpenters are by profession artisan and they generally supply agricultural implements to the villagers and get returns both in cash and kind.

CHAMARS.—The Chamars are notified as Scheduled Caste and besides the traditional profession of making footwear, they also follow cultivation. The services of the women-folk are frequently requisitioned as midwife although they are untrained and follow crude methods. They are now quite progressive and if given opportunity they could equal any other community in any work.

DHANUK AND KAHAR.—At one time the Dhanuks and Kahars along with their women-folk earned their livelihood as domestic servants of the richer sections. When *Palkis* were in large demand the Kahars had a good income as *Palki*-bearers. The Dhanuks and Kahars have been classified under the category of Backward Classes.

DHOBI.—Dhobis are the washermen and belong to both Hindu and Muslim communities. In the rural areas the Dhobis are still paid in kind or allotted fixed bundles of crops during the time of harvest. In the urban areas they are paid in cash. Hindu Dhobis have been classified as Scheduled Caste while Muslim Dhobis have been put under the Backward Classes. The spread of literacy among them has not been very rapid.

DOM.—The Doms of Saran district are divided into two distinct classes—Doms and Magahiya Doms. They are notified as Scheduled Caste under the Constitution of India. At one time the Dom earned their living out of breeding pigs and making and selling of bamboo umbrellas, baskets and fans. The Magahiya Doms had at one time a notoriety as being clever thieves. Risley in his book "*The Tribes and Caste of Bengal*" observed :

"Systematic robbery is so far a recognised mode of life among the Magahiya Doms that it has impressed itself on their religion and a distinct ritual is ordained for observance by those who go forth to commit a burglary. The object of veneration on these occasions is Sansari Mai, whom some hold to be a form of Kali but who seems rather to be the Earth mother known to most primitive religions. No image, not even the usual lump of clay, is set up to represent the goddess; a circle one span and four fingers in diameter is drawn on the ground and smeared smooth with cowdung. Squatting in front of this, the worshipper gashes his left arm with the curved Dom knife and daubs five streaks of blood with his finger in the centre of the circle, praying in a low voice that a dark night may aid his designs, that his booty may be ample and that he and his gangs may escape detection." But this picture does not hold good now and the Doms have very distinctly upgraded themselves.

The Doms offer an extremely interesting study. At one time they were of almost nomadic habits and they lived by hunting, dancing and telling fortunes. The women-folk had a reputation for making love philters and medicines to procure abortion but this does not hold good in every sense now.

A curious illustration of the religious beliefs of the Doms has been furnished by a former Subdivisional Officer of Siwan. A man, named, Kari Dom, had been much troubled by an evil spirit which the wizard whom he consulted found to be the familiar spirit of a neighbour, Gokhul Dom. Kari thereupon came to an agreement with Gokhul that he would recall the evil spirit and never allow it to haunt Kari again, and that should the spirit ever trouble him again, Gokhul would be liable to pay compensation amounting to Rs. 25. This agreement was carefully recorded in a formal document signed by witnesses; but in spite of the deed and the penalty to which Gokhul was liable the evil spirit would not remain quite and again visited Kari, with the result that he sought redress in the criminal courts and brought a charge of cheating against the other party to the transaction.

Doms are now receiving schooling and getting employment.

DOSADH.—The Dosadhs have been classified under the Constitution as Scheduled Caste. They have practically monopolised the duties of *Chaukidars* and *Goraits*; some are also cultivators and the rest are labourers. They also rear cattle and pigs. Their women supplement the income of the family by working hard. Some Dosadhs have now become reputed cook and some have been employed in hotels and restaurents and in the house of the rich. Dosadhs have also been receiving schooling and getting employed. They show the results of acculturisation and belie Risley's remarks. They are now a useful element in the society and are progressing fast.

HAJAM.—The Hajams are now included in the Constitution under Backward Classes and are also known as *Nai* and *Thakur*. They have earned the reputation of being clever. Their chief occupation is shaving but some are also good cultivators and rear cattle. They are paid both in cash and kind. Their role during betrothal is significant though it is on wane. Some village *hajams* practise a rude form of unscientific surgery.

TELI.—Telis have a monopoly of making and selling oil, this being their traditional occupation; a large proportion are grain merchants and many combine money-lending with their trade. The proverb "*Turk, teli, tar, in tinon Bihar*" means that Bihar is made up of Muhammadans, Telis and toddy palms. In the village economy a Teli is indispensable.

JOLAHA.—Among the Muhammadans Jolahas are the most numerous. They weave cloth and some are engaged in agriculture.

Cloth manufacture was an important industry in the past in Saran. As early as 1853 the Collector of Sarkar Saran in his letter no. 128, dated the 27th October 1865, reported to the Commissioner on the state of cloth manufacture and the probable future demand for English cotton goods in Saran. This industry which was the monopoly of the weavers declined owing to the increased price of the raw materials and foreign competition in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially of Manchester cloth. Revelganj, the great cotton mart of Saran, had registered a great decline where the weavers in large number have given up weaving. The cottage industry is getting fresh lease of life under the present Government. The Jolahas are now classified under the Backward Classes in the Constitution. They have upgraded themselves by education and look upon the word "Jolaha" as a contemptuous term. They are now called *Ansaris*. They have shown a great adaptibility to new designs and craftmanship in textile goods. Not only do they form a very progressive and useful element in society but they are politically a well-knit body.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

Religious beliefs of the Hindus.--The religious beliefs of the Hindus have undergone a great change with the lapse of time. The Hindu religious faith is a mixture of animism, polytheism and monism. The monism is an abstruse theory of philosophy and is adhered to by a few highly intellectual people. The followers of Dayanand Saraswati or the Arya Samaj are believers of monism. The Brahmos believe in monotheism of the Upanishada and discard image-worship. Polytheism and animism are followed by the common people. The Hindu religion is still pre-eminently ritualistic and the worship of gods is looked upon as the first duty of man. Oblation, prayer and the recitation of the sacred hymns are also observed. The Hindus worship a legion of gods and goddesses, but the primary gods and goddesses are Vishnu and his consort Lakshmi, Shiva and his consort Bhawani or Parvati, Saraswati, Ganesh, Durga and Mahavira. There are a large number of temples, old and new, scattered throughout the district. Lord Siva has also a great number of temples but the temple of Harihar Nath Mahadeo at Sonepur attracts devout Hindus not only of Saran but of whole India during *Kartika Purnamasi*.

Among the nature gods Agni (Fire god), Suryya (Sun), Sesa-nag (Serpent god), and Indra (Rain god) are worshipped. Hanumanji is taken by some to be the most powerful and benevolent among the hierarchy of gods. Mahaviri *Jhanda* or flag tied in a long bamboo is seen hoisting in the courtyard of the Hindu who worships Mahavir or Hanuman.

Among the non-Vedic gods Bhairwa and Goraia are supposed to be the village guardians and watchmen and the destroyers of

malevolent spirits. Brahma Pichas, is the ghost of a Brahman who meets a violent death and is also widelv worshipped, but the Brahma Baba of Mairwa has attained a local celebrity. Every devout Hindu has a separate room for *devakuri* or the household god. Small image of godlings are also worshipped They are mostly small mounds of earth and they satisfy the masses.

Sacrifice is believed to be greatly efficacious and thus it is looked upon as a bargain or give-and-take between god and man. Goats, lambs, cocks and pigeons are sacrificed to quench the thirst of gods. Big animals, like horse and buffaloes, are rarely sacrificed. At Thawe village there is a temple of the goddess *Singh-Vahini* (Durga) where buffaloes are sacrificed on the Durga *astami* day in the month of *Chaitra*. Living kids used to be offered to the river Ganga. This offering is done by throwing the kids in the sharp current of the Ganga. Sacrifice of animals is now on the wane.

Religious beliefs of the Muslims.—Monism is the cardinal principle of Islam and a devout Musalman has no other god but Allah and his Rasul or Messenger, the prophet Mohammad. But a sort of *saint* worship or *Pir* worship has become a common feature. A Pir's tomb often becomes a place of pilgrimage. In Saran there are several tombs of the *Makhadums* which are locally visited on the occasion of the *Urs* ceremony. The devout Muslims keep awake for the whole night and after the recital of the *maulood*, the *Chadur* or the sheet by which the tomb of the *Pir* is covered, is changed. The Wahabi sect of the Muslim community is not in favour of the *Urs* worship. The village Larki-Dargah contains the *dargah* of the saint Shah Arjan of Patna. Tradition asserts that the saint was attracted by the solitude of the place and performed a *Chila* here, that is, gave himself up to religious contemplation for 40 days. He also, it is said, set up a religious establishment (*Khankah*) which was endowed by the Emperor Aurangzeb; this institution is held in great veneration by the Muslim community and the proceeds of the endowment are utilised to meet the expenses connected with the *dargah*. The anniversary of the saint's death is celebrated on the 11th of *Rabi us-sani* every year and attracts a large number of pilgrims.

The village Hasanpura contains the remains of a large mosque and the *dargah* of the Makhdum Saiyed Hasan Chisti, who came from Arabia to India and settled here. The tomb of the saint is visited by both Hindus and Muhammadans.

In Chapra proper the tombs of Mir Faizullah Shah, Shershah, Haji Shah Mubarak, *Pir* Nazur Shah and *Pir* Makhan Sahid are the most important and are visited by the Muslims.

Saran is one of the very few districts in Bihar where there are a number of Kadiani Muslims. The presence of the Kadianis here is worth investigating.

Customs.

Orthodox Hindus observe various customs from the conception in the womb till death. There are forty *samskars* which are to be observed but now a few are observed strictly.

Birth.

During the period of pregnancy the mother is subject to various taboos. In the case of first pregnancy, the woman has to be saved from attacks of evil spirits and she has to observe a number of restraints. During eclipse she is not permitted to cut anything with force and is asked to hold *kus* grass and stone in her hand till the eclipse continues. Bitter and sour food and acidy fruits are not to be given to an expectant mother. She is also not to sleep in the *angan* or courtyard or under a tree. She has to wear amulets to ward off the evil eye.

In a village and in the family of the common man at the inception of labour pain she is laid down in a room which has been swept clean and kept warm, demi-lighted and free from draught. A midwife, generally *Chamain* (a *Chamar Dai*), is called to attend the expectant mother from the delivery of the child to a period of ten or twelve days. Thorn, old shoe, fire and sword are kept at the door of the room to ward off the evil spirit. The expectant mother often ties up a herb with a pair of rings round the waist. A brass dish is beaten to herald the birth of a male child.

After delivery the navel cord of the child is cut and ashes and oil are first applied on it and then the baby is washed. If the newly-born child is unconscious, the placenta is put on the fire and the cord is rubbed to revive the child. The mother is supposed to be unclean for twelve days and in the upper castes for twenty days and is subject to various taboos.

A ceremony, called *Chhathihar,* is observed on the sixth day of the child-birth and a good deal of rejoicing is followed. *Pujah* is performed by a *pandit* or priest and food is offered to relatives and friend. Presents are given to mother and child by the elders. A major custom is observed if the child is born during a particular period known as *sataisa* which is supposed to be inauspicious. If the child is born during *sataisa nakshatra,* the father is not permitted to see the child unless *sataisa puja* is performed after the lapse of 27 days or other more 27 days. The naming ceremony or *Namkarna* is generally held on the 12th day of the child-birth, provided the child is not born during the *sataisa* period.

The other major *samskar* is *mundan* or the first cutting of the hair of the child. But now in some cases this rite is held simultaneously with the *upanayan* or sacred thread ceremony. *Upanayan* or *Janeui,* as it is popularly known, is the ritualistic ceremony of

investing the boy with *Yajnopavita* (sacred thread). A *mandap* is erected in front of the house decked with plantain trees, mango leaves and green fruits and a pitcher (*kalas*) is kept full of water and turmeric. Relatives and friends are invited and the rite or sacred thread ceremony is performed after observing various obligatory rights. Priests, barber and other attendants usually receive gifts in the form of cloth, money, corn and even lands. Feasts are given to relatives and friends. Hindu law-givers like Manu and others had sanctioned this rite obligatory only to *Brahmans* and *Kshatriya* but now a great laxity is seen as *Vaisya* and Harijans also take the sacred thread.

Marriage.

The next important *samskar* is the marriage rite which is performed with some pomp. The Hindu *Dharma Sastra* has classified eight types of marriages. Marriage is generally settled after examination of the horoscopes of both the bridegroom and bride by an astrologer who predicts whether the stars of both are in harmony and whether the married life will be lucky. But this practice is slowly falling into disuse among enlightened people and cases of love marriage are becoming common. Inter-caste or even inter-racial marriages have also been assimilated in the society.

Marriage is usually settled by the guardians of the parties but the consent of the bridegroom or bride is not ignored. An auspicious day according to Hindu calendar is fixed for performing marriage. On the stipulated day the bridegroom with a party consisting of relatives and friends visit the house of the father of the bride. In the auspicious *nakshatra* the marriage rite is performed by a priest and the Vedic hymns are uttered to solemnise the marriage. After the performance of some rites the ritual of *Kanyadan* or giving away the bride is done by the guardian of the bride which is followed by *Kanyapanigrahana* or accepting of the bride by the bridegroom on the utterance of solemn pledges. The rite of marriage usually comes to a close after giving vermilion or *sindurdan* by the bridegroom on the forehead of the bride. The *sindurdan* has now percolated to all the castes and communities where it was unknown some years before.

Funeral rites.

It is taken to be the religious duty of a son to perform the last rite of the deceased father for his spiritual salvation. The dead body is usually carried on a bier by persons and is usually cremated on the bank of a river or a tank. Cremation is also performed in a desolate place called *marghat* and only the remains of dead bodies of some reputed persons are brought for immersion in the Ganga. Last rites are generally performed by the eldest son of the deceased father and in the case of mother by the youngest. The dead body of the new-born up to the age of five or six years and of the *sanyasi*

or ascetic is usually buried. Lepers and the person dead of snake-bite and small-pox are immersed by fastening an earthen pot to the neck.

The person who kindles fire in the pyre is called *Karta* or chief mourner and has to observe several restrictions for a period. The main *sradh* is performed on the twelfth day of the death of the deceased. *Tarapana* and *Pinda* or oblation and ball of rice or cake is offered to the deceased by the *karta* and the family priest utters hymns for the salvation of the soul. *Sradh* is performed according to the social status of the deceased but an extravagance beyond the means is often seen. *Sradh* at a later date at Gaya is often done.

Customs among Muslims.

Some of the customs of the Muhammadans are different from the Hindus. The Muslim women during pergnancy observe like the Hindus a number of restrictions. After the birth of a child, the father or any male member present recites the *azan*, the prayer called in Arabic in the ears of the child. For forty days the mother abstains from regular prayer. The Muslims circumcise their male children before they reach the age of seven or eight years. They also perform the *Bismillah* or *maktab* ceremony of the child at the age of five by reciting the verses of the holy *Kuran*. This ceremony is supposed to mark the beginning of the educational career of the child. On the occasion of this ceremony sweets are distributed to friends and relatives.

Marriage.—The marriage customs of the Muhammadans are more simplified than the Hindus. Courtship before marriage is slow in coming in because of the *purdah* system among the Muslims. Two male witnesses bear testimony to the celebration of the marriage after taking consent of the bride. After her consent they declare her intentions to the public and then the sermon of the *Khutba-e-nikah* is recited. The bride's father or *Vali* gives away the bride in marriage to the bridegroom. On the eve of departure of the bride to the house of the bridegroom the *jalwa* ceremony is performed. They are made to see each other's face in a mirror and to read the *Kuran* together.

Death.—Recital of verses from the holy *Kuran* and *Kalma* or *la-ilah-ilah-Allah, Mahammad-ur-Rusul-ul-allah* or there is no god except *Allah* and the prophet Mohammad is his Messenger, are made in low voice in the ear of the dying man. The dead body covered with cloth (*kafan*) is placed in a bier (*janaja*) and is carried by men to graveyard. The last prayers are offered near graveyard. The dead body is kept in the graveyard, the head being kept towards west to face Mecca. After the grave is closed the *imam* or *fakir* recites verses of the *Kuran* and all present pray for the peace of soul. On the fortieth day alms are distributed and a dinner is given to friends and relatives.

Customs of Salutation and Etiquette.

Social etiquette is strict on salutation. Young children are taught by their elders to offer salutation to the elders. The manners of salutation, of course, differs according to the degree of seniority or superiority of the man to whom the salutation is offered. But the custom of touching the feet or to lay prostrate before the *Guru* is slowly dying out. A salutation (*Pranam*) with folded hands to elders, and to friends and others of the equal status are now the form of salutation. The uttering of the words *dandwat* and *salam* are becoming out of fashion from the mode of salutation. Exchange of smile is also a recognised form of greeting. When two Muslims meet, the junior offers greeting by uttering *Salam Wale Kum* and the elder recognises the greeting by uttering *Wale Kum Salam*.

According to old code of etiquette one should not be sitting in a chair while the elders are standing. It is also considered a breach of etiquette and particularly disrespect to *biradari* if one in a community dinner finishes his food and stands up when others are still eating.

Superstitions.

The previous belief in incantations, witchcraft, ghosts or evil spirits and the evil eye is on the decline. These malevolent spirits are in the villages still propitiated by means of offerings by witchcraft or *ojhas* who are supposed to control over them due to incantation and oracle. Diseases, like cholera, plague and small-pox are at times taken to be due to the displeasure of the goddess Kali or Durga and offerings and the recital of the text of the *Durga stotra* are made by professional priest and *ojha*. In cases of snake-bite generally exorcism is practised.

There is a popular notion that particular days are auspicious for travels to one direction and inauspicious for other directions. Astrologers are consulted for laying the foundation of a house on a particular land, digging the well and starting business Appearance of some birds and animals while in journey is supposed to be auspicious and some to be inauspicious. Crossing of jackal of one's way is supposed to be inauspicious while mongoose and dear auspicious. Fluttering of right eye in male is believed to be the sign of good omen and ill in female while left is auspicious for female and inauspicious for male. This picture is more of an unlettered man in the village and is almost fading away.

Inter-Caste Relations

The traditional division of *varna* or caste is a part of the society but the pointedness of casteism of the old has practically died out. Untouchability is now a crime. People of different castes now do not hesitate to take food on a common table in the restaurants and hotels. Inter-caste dining is common in a hotel. No one questions now as to who is employed as a cook in a hotel or a restaurant.

Inter-caste marriage and inter-race also are now tolerated. The facilities of communication and the presence of different types of people in the village or town, co-education in the institutions, a shift in the social status have all helped caste-system to shed its perpetuation of difference between a man and a man. The liquidation of the bad aspect of caste-system has started and the trend cannot stop now.

Swami Dharni Das.

Swami Dharni Das is taken to be a contemporary of the Emperor Aurangzeb. He was born at village Manjhi in C. 1646 A. D. His ancesters were employed on the post of *Dewan* in the Manjhi estate. Dharni Das has also served the estate before his renunciation. Dharni Das was a follower of the school of the great Ramanand, a propagator of Vaisnavism. His religious ideas were like those of Kabir Das, the great reformer. He discarded idolatry and superstitions. He had established several *maths* at different places. Parsa *math* near Ekma and Sahnam *math* near Bhatni, where *mela* is held every year, are associated with him and his disciples Sakalanand, Sadanand and Sivanand. There is also a *math* at Manjhi. The number of his followers would be about a lakh. Dharni Das was the author of two Hindi books, *Prem Prakash* and *Sabbd Prakash*.

Religious Movements Between 1893 and 1895.

There had been anti-kine movement. the ploughmen's begging movement and tree-daubing mystery which all took place between 1893 and 1895.

Anti-Kine Killing Movement.

Anti-kine killing movement was started by the *Gorakshini Sabhas* for the protection of the cattle. Emissaries were sent out to further the legitimate object of the societies, the care of diseased, aged and useless cattle. Subscriptions were collected all over the district and even Muhammadans contributed. But unfortunately some untoward incidents happened by the news of *Bakr-Id* riot in the neighbouring districts of Ballia and Gorakhpur. But soon it was controlled by the authorities concerned.

Ploughmen's Begging Movement.

The ploughmen's begging movement should more properly be called a move for encouraging Mahadeo *puja*. The ploughmen had to undergo an elaborate penance which according to the belief was imposed by the god Mahadeo to expiate the sin committed by the agricultural community in overworking their cattle. The ploughmen had to give their cattle three days' rest and go round the neighbouring villages, carry the plough and beg; with the proceeds three wheaten cakes were to be prepared, one for the ploughman himself, one for the cattle and the third to be buried under their stall.

Tree-daubing Mystery.

Tree-daubing was another widespread movement, the meaning of which was a mystery. It began in February, 1894, near the Janakpur shrine in Nepal and spread through the Gangetic districts eastwards to Bhagalpur and Purnea and westward through many districts of the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh). The movement consisted of marking trees with daubs of mud in which hairs of different animals were stuck. One theory was that the marks originated from animals rubbing themselves against the trees, another was that the sign was merely an advertisement of the Janakpur shrine. Another theory pointed out that it was suspicious that it should follow the *Gorakshini* agitation hostile to the administration and that the move was a secret agitation against the Government. This movement had a quick decline.

SOCIAL LIFE.

Property and Inheritance.

For Hindus the law of inheritance is governed by the Hindu law and in the case of the Muhammedans by the Muhammedan law. It is the general principle of the Hindu law that property devolves on the sons on the death of the father. According to Manu, the great law-giver, "to the nearest *sapinda* the inheritance next belongs". In deference of the Hindu law a Hindu's property is never held in abeyance. As soon as the last owner of the property passes away his property devolves upon his nearest *sapinda,* or the person connected nearest. A Hindu accrues his right in the ancestral property as soon as he is conceived, such right cannot be accrued in the separate property of his father.

In joint property the share of the members is not specified. Before the passing of the Hindu Amendment Act, 1956, except *Stridhan,* a woman was legally not supposed to be the last owner of the property, nor a married daughter could claim right in her father's property. But now a daughter has as good a claim in her father's property as the son, provided her father does not debar her by law Secondly a widow had only life interest in the property and she was not legally entitled to dispose of her property as she liked. That disqualification is now removed.

In this district the right of inheritance accrues from the side of the father. Matriarchical system is foreign to this district except in the *Stridhan* in which the right of inheritance accrues legally from the mother's side. But in this also law seldom operates and the son is always preferred by the mother. The sister due to her innate love with brother hesitates to go to the court of law for the assertion of her right.

So far as Muhammedans are concerned the father has absolute right in the properties and can debar any of the sons from inheritance

if he is not satisfied with his son. In Muhammedans the daughter has as good a claim in her father's property as the son and there is a fixed ratio of the right of son and daughter.

FAMILY LIFE.

The family life of the Hindus is categorically different from the western family system where the family constitutes of husband, wife and their children. In joint family system the members of more than one generation live together and have property in common. But it has lost much of its past force due to economic necessities and social changes. The joint family system is disintegrating now even in the villages. The following table from the census of 1951 will give a general picture about the family composition of one thousand families in this district. It would not, however, be proper to generalise on this sample survey of a very small unit :—

Family composition of 1,000 households of general population.

Sample household population—	
Persons	6,378
Males	3,034
Females	3,344
Heads of households and their wives—	
Males	874
Females	527
Sons of heads of households	1,072
Daughters of heads of households ..	804
Other relations to heads of households—	
Males	1,088
Females	2,014

On the whole the family life is individualistic and not community minded. In spite of the social bonds and restrictions of the so-called advanced and educated population, the aboriginals of Chotanagpur live a more community-minded and less individualistic life.

Marriage and Morals.

Hindu marriage is supposed to be more sacramental than contractual. But that conception is now on the wane. The standard of morality of the people is generally good.

Monogamy is generally practised but polygamy is not unknown. Polyandry is unknown in the district. Polygamy is practised only when the first wife is either suffering from sterility or from any incurable disease.

Restrictions on marriage alliance.

Marriage regulations are governed by law, long-sanding customs and traditions. In Hindu society the marriages between near

relatives are always improper and void. The marriage regulations of the both paternal and maternal sides are followed. The party must not be connected either with the maternal side or the paternal side. Apart from these, the marriage between the same *gotra* is also improper. Marriage with the maternal uncle or his son is held to be improper among the Hindus.

Among the Muslims also law and tradition impose certain restriction on marriages according to Muslim theology. Contract marriages under Act III of 1874 are also common. The recent amendments to Hindu Law of marriages have brought about great changes. The number of civil marriage and inter-cast marriage is small in the district. From the enquiry in the District Registrar's office at Chapra it appears that there had been two civil marriages in the district—one in 1942 and the other in 1951 and the parties were Bengalis. Inter-caste marriages according to Vedic rites are not registered.

Dowry System.

Dowry system is still prevalent among the upper castes though it has been declared by law illegal. In a middle class family the marriage of a girl has become a great problem due to dowry problem.

Widow Re-marriages.

The position of the widow without the power of the purse is not satisfactory. Widow re-marriage is not held to be abnormal now. Due to the efforts of Arya Samaj some mariages of the widows are yearly performed.

Divorce.

The ancient law-giver had laid down certain conditions under which divorce can be allowed, but in actual practice marriage among Hindus was treated to be an indissoluble sacrament. Among the Muhammedans divorce (*Talak*) is permissible but the monetary conditions are severe. The Table below will give the number of divorced males and females in different age-group based on sample survey population of 1951 :–

Age-group.	Total.		Divorced.	
	Males	Females.	Males.	Females.
5–14 ..	36,978	36,826	..	..
15–24 .	20.877	23,889	2	5
25–34 ..	18,038	21,925	12	35
35–44 ..	16.235	18,448	22	33
45–54 ..	13,205	14,822	17	75
55–64 ..	9,197	11,192	9	33
65–74 ..	6,039	7,089	5	60
75 and over ..	3,598	4,142	..	25
Age not stated	153	67	..	..

The results of the Sample Survey should only be treated as an indicator and should not be generalised into a picture.

Position of Women.

Women theoretically are held in high esteem but in practice their position is not very enviable. No sacred rituals could be performed without the presence of the wife, if she is alive, if dead her spirit is invoked and a sacred pot is kept in her place beside her husband to perform the religious rites. Economically women are dependent on their husbands. They usually take active part in the family affairs and their consent is essential concerning domestic matters. With high incidence of emigration from the district the responsibility of running the household and agricultural affairs has devolved on many women and the responsibility has been fulfilled well. The women of the lower castes are economically better off and add to the family earnings by manual labour. During transplantation of crop season their demand is so great that sometime they earn more wages than the males.

The general condition of the women in the district whether in rural or urban areas requires an overhaul. The bulk of the men-folk, in spite of their education are still prisoners of old conventions regarding the women-folk. The average educated youth is still hesitant to bring out the ladies of his household. There are distinct signs of a break, however, and the Indian National Congress, Bharat Sevak Samaj, All-India Women's Council, etc., consistent efforts of the State to broad-base women's education have had their share in this welcome change. Women are now holding seats in the Legislature on their own. The men-folk have been responsible for the backwardness of the women.

Sati Custom.

Although dead a few words on this custom in Saran district may be said. From the old correspondence volumes in the district archives it appears that the custom of *sati* or the practice of burning on the funeral pyre of her husband was prevalent in the district in the early nineteenth century. Regulation XVII of 1829 abolishing the practice of burning or burying alive the widows of the Hindus was followed by publication of a mass of literature in the Persian and Hindustani languages and sent to the Magistrate of Saran for circulation. The Magistrate was asked to circulate the instructions to the police Darogas and to apprise all Zamindars, Talukdars, officers. *mandals* and headmen of the villages that immediate information should be sent to the officers of the nearest police-station of intended sacrifice. It was incumbent that the police and others should try their utmost to dissuade the woman from becoming a *sati*. All this had to be done with mildness.

The practice, however, seems to have continued for quite a number of years even after the promulgation of the regulation. A

brief reference to some of the old correspondence on *sati* may be made. The Patna Court of Circuit on the 6th September 1824 asked the Magistrate to include into *sati* report one additional column to indicate the profession and circumstances of the husband. "In order to ascertain if it was prevalent among the opulent and better educated classes in addition to the poor ignorant and also the magnitude thereof." The Registrar of the Nizamat Adalat was referring the Magistrate from time to time to see that women having children under a certain age were prohibited from burning themselves on the funeral pyres Circular Orders, dated the 29th April and 4th June, 1815, signed by Puisne Judges John Tombello, James Stewart and Robert Ker were sent to the Magistrate of Saran to strictly enjoin the police Darogas proceeding immediately on receiving the information of *sati* if likely to occur and to prevent the ceremony. Cases of *sati* in other districts used to be reported to the Magistrate of Saran to keep himself apprised of the facts. The Magistrate was informed by a copy of the proceedings of the Nizamut Adalut, dated the 26th September 1815, that two prisoners, named Khedu Kahar and Chunu Kahar, had been convicted being declared guilty by the *Fatwa* of the Law Officers of the court in case of a *sati*. The Nizamat Adalut. however, released the prisoners as it was found that the *sati* was voluntary and unattended by any criminal conduct on the part of the prisoners; and proper measures appear to have been taken for the support of the infant child of the woman performing the *sati*.

There are interesting documents in the correspondence volumes for the year 1815 showing how the Regulation prohibiting *sati* came to be enacted. It appears that there was a circular in 1813 to prevent burning of women having infant children. This was interpreted in various ways and constantly led to mis-interpretations. Texts from Virhaspati translated by Colebrook were cited. The English translations of three "*Bewasthas*" of the *Pandit* of the Sardar Dewani Adalut were sent. All this was a great departure from a letter, dated the 5th December 1812, which said that a fundamental principle of the British Government was to allow the most toleration in the matter of religion and when it was further laid down that the consent of the woman must be there before she was allowed to become a *sati*.

The steps taken, however, slowly reduced the practice in this district prevalent among the widows of advanced age and in proper circumstances only. In 1827 certain cases of *sati* had occurred in Saran district in the teeth of opposition of relations of victims. Mr. Pringle, Magisrate of Saran was warned by the Patna Court of Circuit in a letter, dated the 18th December 1825, that in none of these cases the police was present and this was considered a slur on their vigilance.

The practice of *sati* or the burning of the widow has totally been eradicated from the district. In the living memory of the people no case of *sati* has occurred.

Prostitution.

The oldest profession as prostitution is called has been in existence in this district from ancient times. The economic dependence of women and their subordinate place in society is one of the causes. Apart from a certain percentage of this population being recruited from among the dependent women, widows or those who have been enticed away, it is peculiar that there are some families who follow the profession of prostitution as a hereditary profession.

There are usually two classes among the prostitutes. The position of one class is such that they feel almost insulted if they are described as prostitudes. They claim to be the followers of the mythological Gandharvas who were famous for dancing and singing. Many of the women of this class are expert in dancing and their services are usually engaged in social functions, like marriage, etc. It is not that some of these dancing women do not become concubines of the richer folk but they consider themselves as superior to the other class who earn a living by hiring themselves.

Saran district had a much larger number of women of these two types before. The number has considerably declined since 1946. Before the partition of the country there were a large number of Muslim families in Chapra belonging to this profession. After the communal riot of 1946, many of them have left for Pakistan or have gone to other districts of India. The abolition of Zamindari and the deterioration of the economic condition of the common man have affected these professionals very adversely. The welcome changes in social ideas do not encourage the singing and the dancing of such women at the social functions. Without a leisured class of men with long purse the financial condition of such women is bound to deteriorate. This is what has happened and many of the girls of such families are now getting themselves educated and turning to other professions. This is a good field for reclaiming these women and utilising them for handicrafts or other skilled professions.

At Chapra there are about 60 families of this profession mostly confined at Bhagwan Bazar area. There has been no segregation of this class into one particular area. Bhagwan Bazar is near Chapra Railway Station and quite close to schools and colleges. This mahalla being one of the busy centres of the town should have been out of bounds for such women. They are all unlicensed (1958) but a list of such families is maintained in the thana register as dancing and singing girls. The other colony of such women is at Maharajganj which is an important centre of trade and commerce.

An enquiry discloses that the prostitutes have their own social code. They are divided into three sub-castes, viz., Gandharva, Ramjani and Musalmani. The professionals belonging to the Gandharva sect are all Hindus. Those belonging to Ramjani may

be either Hindus or Muslims. Musalmani prostitutes are Muslims. They have marriage restrictions and there cannot be any inter-marriage between one sect and the other. The Gandharvas claim a certain amount of aristocracy and trace geneology from the mythological Gandharvas noted for beauty and skill in dancing and singing.

The annual fair at Sonepur which usually meets in the month of November used to attract hundreds of prostitutes and dancing girls from different parts of the State and beyond. Decades before Sonepur fair used to be the meeting place for the Rajas and zamindars, big agriculturists and businessmen and lakhs of common men. The dancing girls had a good harvest. The influx of a very large number of prostitutes in the Sonepur fair every year definitely pulled down the standard of morality of the people of the district. The previous incidence of venereal diseases was very high in the district partially because of this. There was a time when a fee of Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000 for a few dances of some noted dancing girls at Sonepur fair was a common feature. Lakhs of rupees used to be spent over them and there used to be a sort of competition among the richer people to patronise the dancing girls. The common man used to ruin himself by visiting diseased women.

As mentioned before, the abolition of zamindari and the economic deterioration of hitherto moneyed class had affected the influx of such women in Sonepur fair. The visit of the dancing girls and prostitutes has been banned by the State Government in Sonepur fair since 1957. As a matter of fact, this ban has pulled down the revenue from the settlement of the land for holding Sonepur fair. But this was a fitting step to be taken by the Welfare State.

In a similar manner, at every important *mela* and fair there used to be an assembly of some prostitutes. This feature is still continuing but there has been a decline in the number for reasons indicated before. There has been no ban on them at the other *melas* and fairs.

It cannot be denied that there is a certain amount of underground traffic in women. In pre-partition days traffic in women, particularly from North Bihar, was known. One of the aids to this traffic of women was the very large number of *melas* and fairs. It is usually the women-folk who patronised the *melas* and fairs and the scheming men used to pick up girls who had been separated from their families either by accident or through some deliberate ruse. It is a notorious fact that the traffic in women was mostly thriving because of their unfortunate demand in the Punjab. After the partition of the country there has been a decline in this trade. But it cannot be said that traffic in women has been stamped out. In this connection it may be mentioned that the Immoral Traffic Act of 1957 has been extended to this district but it has not been enforced. Social consciousness has to be aroused and a proper rehabilitation in

the practical field is necessary. There cannot be any moral rearmament unless these women are rehabilitated financially. Whatever be the negative side of the question it has to be admitted that the dancing girls had kept up the flow of traditional dance and music at a time when there was no State patronage.

DRINKING.

So far as drinking is concerned, it may be mentioned that during the regime of the First Congress Ministry a portion of Saran district had been declared to be a prohibition area. Unfortunately the ban did not produce very tangible results. There was an illicit trade in intoxicants and veteran drunkards started even drinking methylated spirit when they did not get their country liquor.* This ban was imposed in 1938, and with the resignation of the First Congress Ministry the issue lost its moral force and it was formally withdrawn in 1945.

The innumerable *tal* and *khajur* trees in this district have led to a craze for *tari*. The beverage of unfermented *tal* juice is said to have medicinal value. Fermented *tal* juice or *tari* is almost the poor man's beer and any prohibition of the drinking of *tari* will deprive them of a source of joy. But it could be controlled. Sale of *tari* is controlled by the Excise Department but illegal tapping of *tal* trees for *tari* is difficult to check. There has been no proper census of *tal* trees in this district but the number must be many thousands. Sale of country liquor is also controlled by the Excise Department. There are licensed shops both in the towns as well as in the rural areas where country liquor of different grades is sold. There is a ban for the consumption of country liquor within the premises of the shop. This is mostly followed by breach. The original idea is that if there is a ban of consumption of country liquor within the shop premises there will be a decline in the consumption of the liquor. It was thought that the people will hesitate to buy bottles of country liquor and take them home for drinking the beverage. But this is counteracted by allowing the people drink just outside the shop. Sale of foreign liquor is also controlled. There are very few shops in the district for foreign liquor. The enormous rise in the price of foreign liquor stands as a check to its promiscuous consumption. The use of *nira* or unfermented *tari* has yet to become popular.

Certain types of criminal offences are usually associated with promiscuous drinking. One belongs to the category of sexual offences. Crime figures of such offences will be found in the relevant chapters but it is difficult to say what percentage of such figures could be said to be due to drinking. Another common offence associated with drinking is gambling. Gambling is quite

* This was the personal experience of the Editor. His cook had to be hospitalised at Gopalganj for drinking methylated spirit and being unconscious.

common. It may be mentioned here that during *Diwali* gambling is very common. There are various modes of play which could be described as gambling. The most favourite mode is the play with dices and gambling with cards. Card games are popular in modern society. Such games are bridge, flush, rummy and *tin tasia*.

HOME LIFE.

Dwellings.--The houses in the villages differ considerably from the houses in the urban areas. The villages in this district along with most of the other districts of Bihar excepting the districts in Chotanagpur are usually clustered together at a space of a few miles in between and apart from the cultivation land. The essential characteristic is that the dwellings in a village will all be at one and the same area although there might be a few houses at smaller distance due to their cropping up later or due to the fact that they belong to the so-called lower caste men who have built their own colony a little away from the so-called higher caste people. The individual houses are not sited within the cultivation land of the tenants. There might be one or two small watch sheds within the fields. Villages have not grown as haphazardly as towns in the district. Most of the houses are *kutcha* being built of mud and plaster with thatch ceiling and every well-to-do man has a small *angan* attached to the house. Usually there is a cattle shed or *bathan* just in front of the house. There would also be a sitting place or a paved courtyard in front of the house where the village elders or friends would assemble or where ceremonies are held The houses in the *diara* are merely hutments and are entirely constructed on the higher elevation and at a considerable distance from the bank of the river. The *diara* villages are particularly liable to be inundated by floods or burnt down by fire. There is no sewerage system within the villages and consequently dirty water is allowed to accumulate outside the houses The houses of the well-to-do cultivators have tiled ceiling and some of them have a second storey which is known as *kotha*. There is invariably a portion set apart for the kitchen. The comparatively poorer men follow the same pattern of the house but at a smaller scale. The number of rooms will depend on the size and the economic status of the family. A *pucca* brick-built house was a rarity a couple of decades back Excepting well-to-do zamindars there were hardly any one who cared for brick-built houses. But now conditions have changed and people are going in for houses built of bricks and cement

The villagers lack a sense of sanitation and this is particularly due to the absence of proper conservancy arrangements. The cattle are generally kept just in front of the houses and this causes a lot of filth and insanitation. Compost pits are maintained just in front of the houses and naturally leads to flies and mosquitoes. Sanitary lavatories can be counted on fingers in the villages. As a matter of fact, owing to the lack of conservancy arrangements it is much

better that the average dwelling in the village does not have a private latrine. To serve the purpose of latrine a deep pit is usually dug at a little distance of the dwelling but this does not provide a good sanitation. The open spaces in the outskirts of the villages and the nearby fields are commonly used by the villagers to make up the lack of proper privies in their individual houses. This creates a delicate problem to the women-folk who usually go out to the field either in the early part of the dawn or after nightfall in groups. Bore-hole latrines are now being introduced in the villages.

The towns in the district of Saran as a rule, have been allowed to grow in a very haphazard manner. Not one of the present town in the district has had a planned programme behind their growth. Excepting the district headquarters of Chapra, the other towns have grown because of commercial or administrative importance. Usually the area where the court buildings and the officials live is a better site than the *bazar* portion. Unfortunately there is not much of parity between the municipal amenities in these two areas. There is a clear weightage for the area where the officials live although the main municipal income comes from the other portion.

The houses in the towns are more built of brick, mortar and cement. Old type houses of the richer people have *angans* and a number of rooms, a portion of which is separated for the ladies. It is unfortunate that very little attention was paid to ventilation of the living rooms in the past. Not much attention had also been paid to the bath rooms and lavatories. Sanitary privies are now coming into use but their number is still very limited. The municipalities control the construction of the houses and are responsible for making the conservancy arrangements. The arrangements are poor. Service latrines are still common and it is revolting to human prestige that night-soil should be carried in buckets on the heads. In the *bazar* portion houses are extremely congested and shops and dwellings are intermingled and are sited on either side of the roads. It is unfortunate that in spite of open areas being available there should be an over-crowdlng in particular portions of the town. Unplanned houses are the usual feature in the towns. Many of the houses are such that they are not fit for human habitation but the poverty of people has forced them to live in such hovels. Slum areas are not separated and the condition of some of the slum areas is shocking. There is no planned housing area in the town. There is no thoughtout city development and slum clearance programme yet.

Unfortunately housing problem is such that there is not much of sociability and friendliness in the same areas. It is not unusual for two neighbours being only of a nodding acquaintance although they may have lived side by side for years. This urban trait is, however, entirely absent in the villages.

Furniture and decoration.

Furniture.—Possession of furniture is a sign of money and taste. In the villages the average common man has not got the money to ndulge in a number of furniture. The average household of a middle class family will have a number of *charpais* or sleeping cots, one or two chairs, some wooden benches, tables and a few rope *charpais* which are put outside for friends to sit and gossip.

Urban influence has recently been responsible for the richer villagers to go in for chairs and tables, better type of cots, dressing and dining furniture, almirahs and so forth The accent on the development of villages through Community Projects will make the villagers more furniture-minded. Slowly the *puah*, used for sitting purposes for taking meal, will be substituted by stools, chairs and small tables for the villagers of higher income-group. The change has already started.

The kitchen utensils are the ladies' prerogative and there has not been much of change. The utensils for cooking in common households are *batuli* for cooking rice or pulse, cauldron of brass or iron, pans and tongs for baking *chapatis*, *chhanauta* for frying *pooris*, *kachauris* and *puas*. Earthen pots, brass and copper pots and *thali* (brass plate), *lota* (water pot), *katora*, *chhipali*, etc., are other usual kitchen utensils.

It is unfortunate that owing to economic poverty most of the houses in the villages or in the towns of the lesser income-group are serving merely the purposes of a roof over the head and the features of a comfortable home are absent. On the average a middle class man's house is drab, plain and monotonous just to serve the purpose of existing and not living. The poor man's house is still worse. Even the *pucca* houses of the rich in the past received more attention for useless ornamentation just to impose on the poorer people and did not receive much attention for the size and lie of the rooms, arrangement for bath rooms or proper kitchen. Many of such houses had useless old architectural features, like small balconies, overhanging verandahs, *mehrabs*, niches, etc They would rather be fixed up with ornamental wooden posts or some figures of god and goddesses in front and make the rooms ill-ventilated, small and uncomfortable.

There has been a good deal of change since the last earthquake (1934). People are developing an æsthetic sense according to their financial status Better type small houses which offer more comfort and taste are now going up both in the towns and in the villages. Cement concrete is the rule of the day. Arboriculture within the compound or maintaining a garden is the prerogative of the richer section but is confined to a very small percentage of that section. The municipalities have also neglected roadside arboriculture in the urban areas. There are very few parks and gardens maintained

by the municipalities. The district boards or the local boards have also neglected the arboriculture by the roads in the interior. It is extremely regrettable that not many of the villages in the district can boast of a road connecting the village to the main road.

Dress and Ornaments.

Dress of the people has also undergone a great change. Some costumes which were regarded as abnormal for the common man two decades back are now widely in vogue while many of the old costumes are disappearing. Costumes like a pair of trousers, shirts, an open-neck coat or a buttoned up coat came into vogue in the last 50 years due to the contact of the Britishers. Most of these dresses have now been adopted by the office-going people, businessmen and students. Economically a pair of trousers would be cheaper in the long run and would last for a longer time than a pair of *dhotis*. There should be no wonder that trousers or *paijamas* are replacing *dhotis* to a considerable extent which are still very highly priced.

The common lower garment of male still remains to be the *dhotis* both in the villages and in the towns although *paijamas* and trousers have replaced the *dhotis* to a large extent. A *dhoti* is usually 45 to 50 inches in width and 4½ to 5 yards in length with a narrow coloured border on each of the lengthwise sides. There is a colossal waste of cloth in this particular type of wear. The mill-made *dhotis* are widely used. Handloom *dhotis* are now replacing mill-made *dhotis* to some extent. *Khaddar dhotis* are very expensive and are not popular. Textile and handloom fabrics have made a great progress The First Great War gave *khaki* cloth which is widely used for shirts and trousers particularly for rough outwear. The Second Great War brought in Bush shirts and Hawaian shirts. Even the use of multi-coloured and printed Bush shirts for males has come in. Three decades back a Bush shirt in an office would have been considered almost a sacrilege in an officer, although it is quite common now in the summer. Ready-made clothes are cheaper. Students and office-going people commonly wear more of Bush shirts and trousers in summer and a pair of trousers and a coat with a knitted pull-over in winter. Wool is now widely available and the women-folk find great pleasure to knit. *Kurta*, a loose upper wear garment of the male, is going out of use along with *mirjai*, an unbuttoned upper wear which has two small strips to be tied down together at the middle of the stomach is going out of use. *Baniyan*, half-shirt, drawers are the underwear for the males. Costumes like open-neck coat, shirt and tie, long coat and prince coat are no longer confined to the educated people of the higher income-group. There is clearly more casualty in the dress of old for males There is less consumption of coarse cloth and more of middle-fine and super-fine cloth. Textiles have a bigger market.

Sari still remains the chief dress of ladies. Usually it is 45 to 50 inches wide and 4½ to 5 yards long with a coloured border on

both the lengthwise sides. These borders are of various designs and vary in width. *Suthna* (lady's *paijama*) for Muslim ladies is in use. Under-wears are commonly used. Blouse or a loose upper wear, known as *jhula* or *choli,* with brassiers is commonly used. A *chaddar* or a silk or cotton piece as a wrap is usually used by orthodox and rich ladies when going out. Muslim ladies cover themselves with *burka* when they go out and want to observe *pardah.* The use of *burka* is going down. *Salwar, dopatta* and *paijama* are used by many ladies and specially by school and college-going students. This dress has come from the Punjab and has been found useful for physical exercise. Shawls are used by the ladies of the higher income-groups.

A male child wears a short pant, *paijama,* shirt, *ganji, kurta* and coat as upper garment, while a female child wears frock, *salwar* and *kurta.*

For special occasions, like marriages or the festivities, more ceremonial dresses are put on. An orthodox Hindu bridegroom would put on *jama* and *jora, achkan* and *churidar paijama* or a short coat and *churidar paijama.* Another favourite dress would be a very fine *dhoti,* a silk *kurta* and a silk *chaddar.* A head gear is an essential part of the bridegroom's dress. Flowing *pagri* for the bridegroom is dying out. A Muslim bridegroom would be dressed in a *sherwani* and a *churidar* or *chust paijama.* An orthodox Hindu bride will be presented in a beautiful *sari* the price of which will depend on the financial condition of the bride's guardian. Rich *Benarasi saris* are still the fashion in the richer elements. Ornaments are a part of the dress of the bride. On the marriage day a Muslim bride puts on a *shahana* (*paijama, kurta* and *orhani*) brought by the bridegroom's party. For a Muslim bride also various ornaments are a part of the bridal dress. Educated and westernised bridegroom and bride have been known recently to discard the orthodox robes for marriage.

A dead body is always covered with a new piece of cloth. This is a part of the funeral custom and in the years of the Second War when there was a rigid control over cloth a quota used to be set apart for such purposes and the applicant had to fill in the name of the dead person. According to Hindu custom, the mourner is to wear a white piece of cloth and *uttari* from the date of the cremation (*agni sanskar*) to the day of the last rite usually on the tenth day after the cremation (*daskarma*)

Shoes and *chappals* form the footwear of the average man with some money both in the urban and the rural areas. Villagers who are not fashionable or have no money still use *chamarua* shoes or shoes made of untanned hide. Combing the hair is a common custom. The use of cosmetics, lip-sticks, rouge and other articles of toilet has come to stay and their popularity depends on taste,

money and availability. Women generally have their nails and toes painted with *mehandi* leaf decoction.

Ornaments.

Significant changes have come in the use of ornaments for both men and women. Previously every well-to-do male used to wear ornaments like ring for finger, *bank* for the arm, *kundal* for the ear and gold chain for the neck. Young children used to be given *ghunghru* fitted with bells. The modern males either in the villages or in the towns no longer have any passion for the ornaments excepting the ring or an occasional gold chain.

Women have, however, not much changed in their use of ornaments. Many of the old ornaments still remain although now the slant is towards simpler design, lighter weight and use of stones instead of heavy gold or other expensive metal. There are various types of ornaments for the head, nose and ear. The neck is the most favoured part of the body for the wearing of ornaments and here there has been a certain amount of casualty on the lines indicated. *Humel*, a necklace fitted with bells, *satlari*, seven gold chains strung together, *hasuli*, a solid gold or silver necklace open in the back and *hailan*, a long necklace composed of flat pieces, are not in use. If they are used, they are of smaller size and simpler design. A peculiar ornament for the neck which the second wife has to wear is known as *sautin* to commemorate the first wife. While the second wife applies *sindur* (vermillion) to her hair she has to put some *sindur* on the *sautin* ornament. Ornaments for arm, wrist and fingers remain as before. Some of them are *jhabia*, *kangna*, *churs*, *churis*, etc. The previously used heavy and ornate waist ornaments or belts, like *kardhani*, *kamarkas* and *jhaba* are not much in use now. No gold is worn on the feet as a rule. Silver ornaments and *paijni*, anklets with bells, or *bichhiya* ornaments fitting over all the toes are used. Young children are given *ghunghrus* on the feet.

There has not been much of change in the metals that were largely used in the past. Bronze, copper, silver, gold, jewels and the nine *ratnas* are still used. Economic troubles and change in the taste have brought in imitation jewels, inferior pastes, like lac, glass, brass, imitation gold, etc., for making cheaper ornaments.

Food and drink.

The diet of the common man is very unbalanced and deficient in protein. This is partially due to habits and economic status. Rice, wheat, barley, maize, pulses and vegetables are the common food of the district. Rice and wheat are the staple food of the higher income-group. The people of lower income-group live on barley, maize, other cereals, pulses and *sattu*, a flour prepared from one or other of the various grains. Vegetables also form a main

part of the food. The poorer class and the middle class families take more of vegetables and pulses with their main diet rice or *chapati*. Fish, meat, milk and eggs are relished but the price keeps them away from the table of the common man to a very great extent. Fruits do not form a common item of the dietary of the average middle class or even of the richer section. Fruits like mango and *lichi* are taken during the season, provided they are cheap. But cheaper fruits like plantain and guava are not commonly taken. Sweet potato and *litti*, a cake formed of *sattu* and wheat flour with ingredients inside, forms a favourite menu of a village common man. Milk and its various preparations such as curd, *ghee*, butter and *chhena* are more for the rich. Milk of both cow and buffalo is taken. Goat-milk is slowly coming into vogue in the towns and specially for children. Among the vegetables potato, *palwal*, lady's finger, pumpkin, brinjal, cauliflower, cabbage, beet, radish, bitters and various kinds of spinach are usually taken according to taste and price. Onion and garlic are now commonly used although they were little taken 20 years back. Salad consisting of slices of tomato, radish, onion and lemon juice, etc., has been introduced in the district recently and has spread to the villages. Although there has been no survey it may be said that the majority of the population is vegetarian probably more due to tradition and economic condition.

Vegetarian food has also a number of special variations. Various kinds of sweet-milk preparations are much relished. Many kinds of sweetmeat, *puri*, *kachauri*, dried fruits, pickles, snacks like *papar*, *tilauri*, or *sukhauti* change the monotony of the ordinary vegetarian food. The culinary condiments generally used are turmeric, cumin-seeds, pepper, ginger, cardamoms, cloves, coriander seeds, cinnamoms, nutmeg, mace, cassia, cubeb, mustard, saffron, assfoetida, onion and garlic. The cooking medium is usually some kind of oil like mustard, hydrogenated oil (vegetable *ghee*) and *ghee*. Unfortunately pure *ghee* is a rarity now

There are various kinds of meat preparations current in the district. Most of them are of *Moghlai* types like *biriani polao*, *kabab*, *kurma*, *murgmoshallam*, etc. The restaurants are popularising meat preparations like cutlet, chop roast, etc. Tea shops are found in every town and big villages. Tea drinking is becoming a common habit in the middle class families and in the group of people belonging to the class of the heavy workers like mechanics, drivers and hard manual labourers Tea shops are fast becoming the clearing house for gossips and rumours. Coffee has not yet become popular. Tea drinking is yet to become the common beverage of the lower income-group villagers. Cold drink or *sarbat* in the summer season and specially on ceremonial occasions is common. *Lussi* made of curd is also becoming a popular drink in the summer season. Various kinds of aerated water more attractive for the colour have penetrated even into the villages. Cold drink prepared with

various kinds of seeds of flowers, rose petals, almond, black pepper, curd and sugar are in vogue in the richer class. *Bhang* is not a popular beverage. It is taken particularly during the Holi festival. The higher excise revenue leads one to think that there is now more consumption of toddy and country-made liquor. Smoking is also becoming quite common in spite of the increasing price of tobacco. Smoking among women is very common. *Biris* and cigarettes are slowly replacing *hukka* smoking. Smoking of cigar is not common. The chewing of *pan* with areca nut is very common and expenditure on it is not inconsiderable.

Amusements.

A sense of humour and the craving for amusements are there but need development and satisfaction. The indigenous sources of entertainment are, however, dying out. Songs and music have a great fascination for the rural people. The lyrics of Tulsidas and Surdas, *bhajans or devotional songs accompanied with musical* instruments like *jhanj, manjira, dholak* and harmonium add to the attraction. Like *bhajans, kirtans* are also very popular.

Apart from devotional songs and music there is a craze for particular types of songs in tune with seasons. The *barahmasa* songs common in the rainy season have an amorous fervour. In *Shravan* month *kajri* and *birha* songs are much in vogue. *Jatsari* songs are indulged in by women while grinding the wheel to break the grains and the songs take away much of the monotony of the work. *Sohar* and *jhumar* songs are very popular *Sohar* is to mark the birth of a child while *jhumar* is a synthesis of music and dance. Pastoral songs are sung by the women labourers while transplanting paddy seedlings. Men sing *purvi* songs which are amorous and depict the pangs of separation from the beloved. At Holi time songs with an erotic slant are common. Many of the songs are rick in thought and are great specimens of a delicate web of words.

The *melas* and fairs are very much looked for. These *melas* came into vogue when communication was difficult and served a great trade purpose. Some *melas* have a religious or economic origin. But the fact that now with the easy accessibility of all kinds of goods near the villages these *melas* are still thriving shows that they are a part and parcel of the rural life. There has been a touch of modernism to many of these *melas* and fairs. The songs and dance propagated by Bhikhari Thakur, roving cinemas, social dramas, *Ramlila* and *nautanki* plays are the usual features of the *melas* and fairs. The songs of Bhikhari Thakur have a particular purpose, they depict the evils which are corroding the social life. The *melas* have a tremendous social value in the district.

Football matches and wrestling have also a great hold on the rural public. Regular theatres are not very common. But during particular festivals like *Durgapuja* or *Deepawali,* a stage is often fixed up in the big villages and dramas are performed. Such dramas

always attract a crowd. On the model of the exhibition in the towns many of the *melas* in the rural areas have started organising exhibitions. Sonepur *mela* stands by itself and has established the trends of many of the *melas* in Saran district. It has also to be noted here that the very few amenities in the villages stand a great competition with the itinerant cinemas. Hindi cinema songs have percolated to the villages. Although cinema songs have not yet got that hold on the rural mind to stand seriously on the way of popularity of *kirtans*, and *bhajans* but the slant in the younger generation is to pay more attention to the catchy cinema hits and cheap Hindi novels.

The towns have somewhat better facilities for amusement and recreation. But the facilities are neither adequate nor easily available. Very few towns in Saran district have got a large number of libraries. As a matter of fact, the rural libraries are more patronised than the libraries in the towns. The student population which is increasing in the towns has very little to do in their evening hours This is rather unfortunate The bulk of the student population either roam about or congregate near the tea shops or restaurants or visit cinema houses. Football matches and other games have a strong hold on them which should be canalised to organise more of sports, cultural meetings, reading rooms, etc., to keep them engaged. The authorities of the educational institutions have very little touch with the students for their evening hours. The towns do not have adequate playing grounds, parks or centres of cheap amusement and recreation

Newspapers are read but have not got a good circulation in any of the towns in consideration of the number of the literates. Vernacular newspapers are making a quicker headway in the towns. Cinemas are the biggest attraction in the towns now for the amusement and recreation. Young girls have been taking the cue for their dress and manners to some extent from the cinema stars on the screen. Cinema hits are on the lips of many. Exhibitions and theatricals are occasionally held and attract a good number of people. The roving circus parties have a good trade in the towns.

Festivals.

Festivals form a part of the daily life of the Hindus and the Muslims particularly in the rural areas. Urban life does not encourage punctilious observation of the festivals. The importance of the festivals in the social life has been recognised by the large number of holidays observed by the State Government offices. There are religious ceremonies, fastings and offering of prayers associated with most of the festivals. *Janmastami*, *Sivaratri* *Ramnavami*, *Tij*, *Jiutia*, *Chhath* besides *Durgapuja*, *Deepawali* and *Holi* are some of the important festivals for the Hindus. *Durgapuja* is celebrated in the month of *Asin* and the length of the holidays encourages a family re union during this period The *puja* season starts from the first day of the bright part (*Sukla*) *Asin* month

and completes on the tenth day. The goddess Durga is worshipped mainly but other gods and goddesses are also worshipped in certain areas during the season. *Deepawali* is celebrated on the fourteenth and fifteenth day of *Kartik*. It is a festival of lights. Houses are decorated with small earthen lights or with electric lights now and *Lakshmipuja* is celebrated. Various mythological episodes are associated with the festival of Holi which is celebrated at the beginning of the spring (March-April). According to the story of *Bhagavat Puran* there was a struggle between vice and virtue in the persons of the demon king, Hirnakashyapa and his virtuous son, Prahlad. Prahlad had to suffer many trials for his faith in God. At last the demon king ordered Prahlad to sit in the lap of Holika, who was fire-proof by a boon granted to her by Brahma, while a devastating fire was burning. The devastating fire, the story mentions, did not burn Prahlad but destroyed Holika. This event is allegorically celebrated now by a bon-fire (*Holikadahan*). *Holikadahan* is accompanied by songs and the beating of musical instruments. On the next day the colour festival is observed and people make merry by sprinkling coloured water on one another.

Muharram, *Sa-be-barat*, *Ramjan*, *Id*, *Bakrid* and *Fatiha-duaz-dahum* are important Muslim festivals. *Muharram* is celebrated to commemorate the death of the grandson of the prophet Mohammad who was killed in the battlefield of Karbala in Arabia. The *Shia* Muslims particularly hold this festival with great sanctity. *Tajiyas* are made and taken in procession in the memory of the departed soul. *Sa-be barat* is celebrated on the fourteenth day of *Saban*. On this day Muslims visit the tombs of their ancestors and offer prayer. *Ramjan* is the month of fasting according to *Kuran*, the holy book of the Muslims. There is a religious obligation on an adult Muslim to observe fast for one whole month. On the eve of breaking the fast each day after sunset they assemble in congregation in a mosque to offer prayer. *Id* is celebrated on the succeeding day of the last *Ramjan* or after seeing the moon. It is the day of rejoicing as it comes after a month's fasting. *Bakrid* is celebrated in the memory of the prophet, Ibrahim Khalil Ulla, who preceded the prophet Mohammad. *Fatiha-duaz-dahum* is celebrated on the twelfth day of Rabi-ul-aul. On this day the birth anniversary of the prophet Mohammad is celebrated by his followers.

COMMUNAL LIFE.

Pilgrim centres.—In the past when communication was not fully developed the role of the pilgrim centres in the life of the community was remarkable. Sonepur fair has always been a great centre for meeting and exchange of ideas. The big and small, lakhs used to meet at this fair and it has been the clearing house for goods, animals and ideas. Old records show that even the people from Tatar and Arabia used to come to this fair during the time of the later Mughals for selling horses.

During the time of the European planters the fair was the occasion of a large social and sporting gathering. The Sonepur fair was much patronised by the European Indigo planters of the nineteenth century. A large camp was held in a magnificent grove and the visitors amused themselves with racing, polo, gymkhana, tennis, dances and visits to the fair. The European planters did much for the expansion of the communication.

To the Hindus of India, Sonepur *mela* has a special significance owing to the temple of Hariharnath Mahadeva and the site of the mythological battle between the crocodile and the elephant and the rescue of the latter by Hari. They offer oblation to Lord *Siva* on the *Kartik Purnamasi* day. More details of Sonepur fair will be found in the chapter on Places of Interest.

There are other pilgrim centres of local importance. Mairwa attracts a large number of local people in *Kartik* and *Chait* owing to the shrines of Hari Baba and the goddess Durga. Godna or Revelganj is regarded locally as the traditional residence or *ashram* of Gautama, the founder of Nyaya philosophy which embraces Indian logic. It is also the place where Ram delivered Ahalya from the great curse. A fair is held in the month of *Kartik* and *Chait*. At Semaria, the geat Hindu sage Dattatraya, who had 24 *gurus*, is said to have lived here and close by is Gautam Rishi's *asthan* on which a temple is built. A fair is held on the *Kartik Purnamasi* day and is largely attended by women. A big turnover of cattle also takes place here. Silhauri contains a temple of Lord *Siva* and a fair is held twice in a year which lasts for ten days in the month of February and April. Ami is connected with the mythological *sati*, the wife of Lord Siva, who laid her life in the *Yagyakund* or sacrificial fire of her father *Daksha* in rage. It is said that it was the site of the sacrificial fire. A temple is built for the commemoration of the event and a fair is held annually in the month of *Kartik*. At Thawe there is a temple of the goddess Durga. A fair is held on the *Chait asthami* day and sacrifice is offered to the goddess Durga. Sometimes buffaloes are also sacrificed.

Saran has several mounds of the Buddhistic period. Chirand is connected with the life of Lord Buddha and his great disciple Anand. According to Dr. Hoey it was the site of the ancient Vaisali but this hypothesis is not supported by the majority of the Buddhist scholars. It is said that Anand on the approach of death came to Chirand and is said to have entered into Samadhi (ascension) and his body was parted into two parts to satisfy the cravings of the two rival claimants—Ajatsatru, the king of Magadha and the inhabitants of Vaisali who wanted to preserve his body. The story is preserved that the name of Chirand is taken after this incident *chidra anga*, the divided body. According to Hindu tradition the body of the mythological king, Mayuradhwaj, was here divided by saw in order to test his generosity and faith by Lord Krishna in the *Dwaparyuga*.

It is also said that there was the *ashrama* of Chyavana Rishi. A fair is held here in the month of *Kartik*. There is also a mosque said to have been built by king Hussain Shah of Bengal. Chirand is the centre of pilgrimage to Hindus, Buddhists and Muhammedans.

Dr. Hoey is of opinion that Sewan is identical with Kusinara, the scene of Lord Buddha's death. The modern village Papaur is said to be Pava, where the goldsmith Kunda served *Sukar-mardaba* a poisonous mushroom and not boar's flesh, as is usually mistaken, which gave Buddha his fatal illness.

Some of the Muslim pilgrim centres have been described previously under the local Muslim saints and *Pirs*.

Games.

The sports of the children as all over the world are marked by a number of "imitative" and "make-believe" games, wherein they play the various roles of cartman, horse-driver, engine-driver, palanquin-bearer and music-player. Doll's marriage is played by the young girls. Some of the important indigenous games of the children are given below :—

Looka-chori (*hide and seek*).—This is played by the children in a group and there must be some hiding places in the playing area. The *chor* (thief) boy is chosen and is blindfolded. The players run and hide, and one signals with a shout to announce that all are hidden. On this *chor* boy unfolds his eyes and searches to find out the hidden players who rush to the agreed spot and touch it before the *chor* boy. The player touched by the *chor* before the touching of the stipulated spot becomes the next *chor* and the play then re-starts. There are other variations of this popular game.

Rumal-chor.—In this game all the players sit in a circle except one who runs round the circle with handkerchief in his hand which he places unnoticed behind one of the players. If the picked player is alert, he immediately picks up the handkerchief and takes the place of the rounder and runs round the circle to place the handkerchief behind some other player. If the rounder completes one round and reaches behind the picked player without the latter noticing the handkerchief, he picks up the handkerchief and with it beats and chases the player till he takes one round and resumes his seat. In this manner the play goes on till it comes to an end.

Kabaddi.—*Kabaddi* is played by two parties of equal number. It is a game for the young and adults and one has to be physically and mentally strong and alert to participate in it. Some of the other popular games are

Chikka and *Athalmathal* which call for quickness and vigour. Wrestling has a great fascination. Unfortunately owing to the want of patronage this is dying out. Saran district had quite a number of far-famed wrestlers in the past fifty years.

Besides these indigenous games, the modern games like football, tennis, volley-ball, badminton, ping-pong and billiards are popular. Apart from schools and colleges, the athletic societies are formed in the villages and towns by the enlightened people. The Football Association of Chapra is the leading association of the district and attracts players both local and outsider. A number of tournaments are run.

Recreation Clubs.

In the days of the European planters there was great club life It died out with them. Fresh club life has not taken deep roots.

The number of clubs in the district is very few and mostly confined in the towns. *Akharas* used to take the place of clubs in the villages once.

Even at the district headquarters, Chapra, there are only two clubs—Chapra Club and Saran Club. The members are mostly men of higher income-group, officials, doctors and pleaders. In both the clubs there are arrangements for indoor and outdoor games. There are also smaller clubs at the two subdivisional headquarters of Siwan and Gopalganj where tennis is played. Marhowra factory has a club. *Kalibari* at Chapra and the various temples and libraries encourage a sort of club life.

Hindu-Muslim Reapproachment.

As mentioned before the Muhammedans are evenly distributed all over this district and there has been good result of the contacts of the two creeds In the latter part of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century, Urdu was the medium of instruction in the district. *Maulvis* were employed for the purpose by the rich and the poor and both the children of Hindu and Muslim used to get education together. In the early British rule a good deal of importance was laid on the knowledge of the current Indian languages, namely, Persian, Urdu and Hindi. An extract of resolution of the Governor-General in Council, dated the 24th January 1794, was forwarded to the Magistrate of Saran and laid particular emphasis on the knowledge of the Persian language as a pre-requisite qualification for the Judge of the Circuit. A letter from the Collector of Saran to the Commissioner, dated the 20th March 1854, mentioned about the dearth of schools and that Persian and a little Arabic were more popular with the sons of the educated people. It is also mentioned that Persian and Urdu *Maulvis* were patronised by the upper class of people, particularly the Kayasthas.

Hindu *gurus* and *pandits* imparted education through the medium of Hindi and Muhammedan pupils got vernacular education through them. Thus there developed a spirit of fellowship and oneness and paved the way for religious toleration and friendship. Many Hindus became familiar with the different *sayars* and of their *gazals*, *qasidas* and *masnavi*. Even some began to compose *sayari*. With the contact of the Hindus and the spread of the vernacular education Muslims also became familiar with the Hindu folklores and literature.

The affinity is also witnessed elsewhere. The *dargaha* and mosques of the Muslim *pirs* and saints, such as Lakari *dargah* and Hassanpur, are visited by both Hindus and Muslims alike. Hindus offered *sirni* and puja at the mosques and tombs of the Muslim *pirs* like the Muslims. Hindus have always participated in the *Muharram* procession and some even wear green cloth like the Muhammedans. Many Muslims observe the *Basant* and *Holi* festivals of the Hindus and share the joys of the Hindus. Muslim women sing the songs of the Hindu goddesses of *Gangamai* and the *Durga*. Both Hindus and Muslims believe that the malignant diseases like cholera and small-pox are caused due to the displeasure of the goddess *Kali*, as such Muslim women sing the songs and invoke the goddess like the Hindus. Muslim sorcerers are called in for incantation and enchantment by the Hindus and the *ojhas* and *gunis* by the Muslims. Enchanted head, rosary and amulets are worn by both Hindus and Muslims alike, which are evidently the gift of the mixed culture. Muslim agriculturists are familiar with the twenty-seven *nakshatras* of the Hindus and also with the months of the Hindus like their own. Brotherly relations and close intimacy is also seen in their behaviour.

Economic and professional groups and classes in relation to social life.

The majority of the population of the district are agriculturists. Like the other districts of the State the agriculturist class is divided into four groups. The first group is the owner-cultivators, the proportion of which is highest in the district. Out of the total of 28,62,950 of the agricultural population 22,65,816 or about 80 per cent were found to be the owner-cultivators according to 1951 census. Next to this group comes the cultivator of land mainly unowned, i.e., Bataidars, the number of which in 1951 was 1,58,955 or 5.6 per cent of the agricultural population. The third group is the landless labourers. Numerically they are next to the first group. In 1951 census 4,27,264 or about 14 per cent of the agricultural population were enumerated as agricultural labourers. The fourth group is the foregoing landlords and they were found to be 10,915 in 1951.

Next to agricultural population are the non-agricultural classes. The total number of them in 1951 was 2,92,194 or about 10 per cent of the total population. The non-agricultural classes like agricultural classes comprise all persons who derive their livelihood from

production (other than cultivation), commerce, transport and other services and miscellaneous sources; the number of them in the census of 1951 was 71,282, 87,623, 12,423 and 1,20,866, respectively.

From the abovementioned account it is apparent that the impact of the agricultural class is far reaching in the district. They form the backbone of the rural population. It was peculiar that, though a minority, the zamindars had a leadership even if they did not give any contribution. In order to understand the impact of abolition of zamindari we have to go a little into the background of history. From the early old correspondence volumes preserved in the Chapra Archives, it appears that during the early part of the British administration the zamindars were mostly free-booters and kept their own *lathials* and wrestlers for protection and aggression. To make matters worse the early British administrators entrusted them with the police duties. From the Cadastral Survey Report it appears that some of the zamindars of the district were recalcitrant and oppressive. The zamindars wielded great power through the fear-complex of the tenants.

Throughout the whole period of the zamindari system the rent disputes were common. One very fruitful cause of the rent disputes was, as mentioned in the Survey and Settlement Operations (1893—1901), to consolidate *abwabs* or illegal exactions with the rent. There were 13 types of *abwabs* They were as follows: *tahrir, badarat, besi, karcha, salami, dak behri, bandh behri, pulbandi, kotwali, batta* or *batta* company, *khunti, khapta* and *dwatpuja*. From the statistics of the civil suits it becomes apparent that the number of rent suits was many times larger than the other types of civil suits. The following statistics are suggestive :—

Year.		Rent suits.	Money suits.	Title suits.	S. C. C. suits.	Miscellaneous medical cases.
1953	..	10,730	1,053	1,482	1,979	2,068
1954	..	13,752	1 093	1,521	2,040	2,325
1955	..	17,444	1,172	1,47[illegible]	2,293	2,270

These figures are of the period when the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, had already been passed and the efforts of the ex-landlords trying to realise the arrears of rent might be a cause of the high incidence of rent suits, but even in the normal period the institution of rent suits was much higher than the civil suits.

The abolition of zamindari has affected the landless labourers, service-holders, lawyers and merchants. This leisured class used to employ a vast number of retinues either from the class of landless labourers or middle class men as *gomastas, patwaris, goraits, barahil, tahlus*, etc. The actual number of the employees

of the ex-landlords is not available but from local enquiry it is presumed that about two to three thousand used to get employment. After the abolition of zamindari only a negligible portion of the service holders of the ex-zamindars has been appointed on the post of *karamcharis* by the Government who were either *gomastas* and *patwaris*. Since the district has not been fully industrialised, there is not much scope for getting appointment of those retrenched employees of the ex-landlords. So far as the lawyers are concerned, they have lost a main source of income with the reduction of civil suits in the form of rent disputes. The other professional groups who have been adversely affected are the bullion merchants and the merchants of consumers' goods.

The abolition of zamindari has also affected schools, colleges, art and music. A good number of musicians and singers used to get employment in the estates. The Sonepur fair which is one of the greatest fairs of the world has declined much since the abolition of zamindari. The vacuum has not yet been filled up although the State has taken up the character of Welfare State and are financing libraries, schools, colleges, art and music centres, etc.

The abolition of zamindari has been the last nail on the coffin of the old type of aristocracy and social values. Previously casteism played a great role in the social life of the district. Also the so-called higher caste man whether he be educated or cultured would command a natural leadership. The higher caste people took full advantage of this position and there was a gap between them and the labouring classes and particularly the so-called low caste men. With the spread of Western education, changes came over Saran district along with the other districts of Bihar. The English educated men in the villages came to be looked upon as somewhat different and leadership slowly passed into such men and the zamindars. Money played a great part in this social change. If an English educated man had money as well there was no question of his not being the leader in the village. The zamindars gradually became a class of men who started out-growing their utility by their leisurely ways and want of contribution to the society. It is true that the zamindars in this district were great patrons of culture but towards the second decade of the twentieth century with the spread of education, the common man started questioning the natural leadership of the higher caste men and the zamindars. The political turmoils and the mass consciousness that was aroused with the advent of the Non-Co-operation Movement brought about a great upheaval and the common man whether educated or not, shed his fear and blind regard for the zamindars, the English educated leaders and the constituted Authority. Saran district was also in the throes of an intense *Kisan* agitation in the second and the third decades of the twentieth century. There was a sort of peasants' revolt and suspension of payment of rental and courting the jail became quite common.

The mass movement of Gandhiji had already torn down the fear-complex of the people about the power and prestige of the Government. All this brought about a revolutionary change in social values and the Second Great War accelerated this trend. There was a peculiar circulation of money brought about by the Second Great War. High casteism gave place to a new caste of the rich. Overnight some people became rich. There was a peculiar abandon in domestic life and society and many of the orthodox moorings of the society were snapped.

This phase was followed by quick changes in the political horizon and Saran district played an important part in the Congress movement along with the other districts in Bihar. In 1942 this district was in the throes of conditions which amounted to almost a revolution. For a few days in parts of the districts there was a complete negation of Governmental authority. Unfortunately the mass movement took the shape of violent destructive modes like the tampering of the railway lines and burning of Government institutions On the other side there was a spirit of ruthlessness on the part of the authority and firings on students and processions became a common feature. The events in 1942 were followed by the communal outburst in 1946 and other quick political changes. Then came the declaration of Independence and a complete withdrawal of the European elements from the services. The Independence brought in peculiar problems and one of the biggest changes was the turnover of the Police State into a Welfare State. The accent has now been put on the development projects and very rightly the shift is towards the villages. The gap in civic life between a village and a town, a villager and an essentially town-resident has to be removed.

A district of the size of Saran with the highest density of population in the State and an exclusive agricultural economy has her own problems. The biggest problem is the ever-increasing population. It is quite clear that the district, as it is, cannot possibly absorb the evergrowing population. The agricultural economy has reached almost a saturation point and agriculture must also be industrialised to keep pace with the changes. There must be more technical skill in agriculture and a certain amount of managerial skill which could be canalised into the co-operative farmings. With the growth of population there is the necessary corollary of wastage of human power. Saran district has a typical teeming population much of which is not fully utilised and has to be fed without any contribution There is no doubt that there must be a regimented population and the emphasis on birth control has not come too soon particularly in this district. With the development of other districts in the different States in India and abroad the tempo of emigration will diminish. It has also been indicated elsewhere that emigration was a safety valve for the growing population of this district. Emigration had sent a lot of money to the district from abroad which was fully utilised in buying up

lands and a closer land use was the result. While emigration has in a way been very helpful to the district, it cannot be denied that it is now in a vicious circle.

Among the recent changes particular mention has to be made about the social condition of the women-folk. Girls' education has spread but it is still extremely backward. The district lives in the villages and the best leadership in the villages could only come from the women who have got tradition and culture behind them and all that they require is the touch of literacy and education. Much of the problem of the district owing to its population can only be solved by educating the women-folk. There has been an extremely lopsided progress in this district particularly and the progress of female education is far behind than what we find in some of the districts of South Bihar and particularly in Chotanagpur. This lopsided progress has got to be stopped.

Among the other important recent changes affecting the life of the people in general are a very wide adult franchise and the emergence of a number of political parties. The rapid spread of education is shown by the large number of schools and colleges that are ever multiplying. The Press has been able to shape public opinion to a certain extent. The parochial feelings are being shed. With the rapid changes the common man has come to realise that he cannot live on a mere sustenance level only. The emergence of the common man is in a way the epitome of the changes that have occurred within the last two or three decades.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Agricultural Population

Saran district has an area of 2,678 square miles and a population of 31,55,141 according to the *District Census Hand-Book* of 1951 figures. The figures of both the area and population are somewhat different from the figures mentioned in the census tables of 1931 and 1941. According to the census table of 1931 the total area is 2,683 square miles. This slight difference is due to different method of surveys. According to the Surveyor-General of India the present area of the district is 2,669 square miles. However, the difference between the figures is small and can be ignored

The *District Census Hand Book for Saran* (1956) gives the population of the district from 1901 onwards in the different census years as follows :—

1901	..	..	..	98,68,569*
1911	..	.	..	22,89,699
1921	..	..	..	23,40,222
1931	.	..	..	24,86,737
1941	..	..	..	28,60,537
1951	..	..	..	31,55,144

These figures again are slightly different from the figures in the census table of some of the previous census tables.

Agriculture has continued to be the main occupation in the district. The basis of enumeration in census regarding the population dependent on agriculture has varied from one census to another. The 1951 census puts the population engaged in agriculture and allied occupations at 28,62,950. This works out at 90 per cent of the population.

J. H. Kerr in his Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Saran District, 1893 to 1901, discussed the classification of the population according to occupation in 1891 census and came to the conclusion that about 85 per cent of the population was kept engaged by agriculture and pastoral occupations. Kerr had independently based his calculations on a sample test over 100 typical villages and came to the conclusion that not less than 84 per cent

* The figures are obviously wrong. In the provincial tables as well as the break up figures of D. C. H. B. are 24.09.365 which seem to be correct.

of the population was directly dependent upon agriculture. There is a foot-note to the report added after the census report for 1901 was written. The foot-note mentions that the census report published this percentage at 81.6 per cent covering rent payers, agricultural labourers, rent receivers and miscellaneous. The basis of Kerr's own estimate of 84 per cent was a sample survey showing the average size of the holdings occupied by the members of different castes and the percentage of the area held by each caste to the total area dealt with.

P. N. Gupta in the Final Report on the Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations in Saran District from 1915–1921, has mentioned that from the figures of the census report for 1911, he thought, 86 per cent of the entire population consisted of people engaged in agriculture. Mr. Gupta considered the data thrown up by his Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations and was of the opinion that the previous figure of agricultural population requires slight changes. He has, however, not come to any definite conclusion Mr. Gupta found that extensive emigration and ravages of plague and other epidemics had largely eased off the pressure of population and that the people were generally living in comparative ease and comfort, except those who had by imprudence and improvidence incurred heavy debts. Emigration was described by him as a real salvation to the people of Saran.

According to the statistics obtained at the census of 1921, out of every thousand persons in the district, 901 persons were supported by agriculture.

The census report of 1931 does not classify the figures of non-working dependents for the different occupations. According to the census report of 1931, out of the population of one thousand persons, 424 persons are earners, with or without a subsidiary occupation. Out of these 424 persons, 399 are engaged in exploitation of animals and vegetation. Broadly speaking, the persons enumerated under this head could be described as people dependent on agriculture and the allied occupations. But the tables, however, do not give the figure of the actual dependents on the earning persons. That is why it may not be correct to come to any definite conclusion as to the figure of persons dependent on agriculture. The census of 1941 does not give the figures for the different occupations Owing to war exigencies the census operations were very much curtailed in 1941. About 90 per cent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood according to 1951 census figures.

The above analysis will show that agriculture has continued as before to be the main source of livelihood.

The following are the break-up figures of population engaged in agriculture and in various allied occupations according to 1951 census.:—

Population engaged in Agriculture (1951).

	Self-supporting persons.		Earning dependants.		Non-earning dependants.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependants.	4,84,467	1,89,315	28,183	25,202	5,67,340	9,71,309
2. Cultivators of land wholly or mainly unowned and their dependants.	32,967	14,494	2,832	2,574	39,246	66,842
3. Cultivating labourers and their dependants.	77,000	41,247	5,986	3,112	1,09,810	1,90,109
4. Non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent-receivers and their dependants.	2,818	1,040	203	149	2,217	4,458
Total ..	5,97,282	2,46,096	37,204	31,037	7,18,613	12,32,718

Population engaged in allied agricultural occupations (1951).

	Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.		Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Males	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Plantation	..	.	45	..	25	6	70	5
2. Forestry and wood cutting ..	.	.	.	..	106	44	106	44
3. Stock raising .. .	11	3	52	..	220	124	283	127
4. Rearing of small animals and insects.	..	..	3	..	26	..	29	..
Total ..	11	3	100	.	377	173	488	176

The majority of workers on the land, according to 1951 census, are the cultivating owners, numbering 22,65,816, who work on their own farms. The number of agricultural labourers who work on other people's farms for wages in cash or kind is 4,27,264. For personal reasons a small population of 10,915 non-cultivating owners of land gave out their lands to tenant-cultivators on rent.

The Land Reforms Act passed in 1950 must have brought out an alignment of the groups mentioned before. By the Land Reforms Act the estates have been vested in the State and the zamindars as rent-receivers have been done away with. The non-cultivating owners of land, however, will probably be affected the most and are expected to fade away slowly because of the change in the status of the *Bataidar* under a special Act in the wake of the L. R. Act.

RAINFALL.

The average rainfall in inches for Saran district from 1936-37 to 1955-56 is as follows :—

Year.	Average rainfall in inches.
1936-37	58.44
1937-38	43.03
1938-39	56.56
1939-40	44.52
1940-41	34.60
1941-42	42.88
1942-43	45.37
1943-44	38.13
1944-45	42.40
1945-46	38.50
1946-47	51.92
1947-48	38.57
1948-49	49.17
1949-50	48.46
1950-51	36.48
1951-52	36.74
1952-53	43.18
1953-54	69.41
1954-55	32.26
1955-56	47.50

The average normal rainfall is 44 91 inches.

Importance of rainfall.

Saran is a fertile triangle of rich alluvial soil washed on two sides by the Gogra, the Ganga and Gandak. The soils of the district are such that unlike most of the other districts in Bihar, the district depends upon one or perhaps two harvests and stands or fall by them. The crops of Saran are fairly evenly divided among the three great harvests of the year. This distribution of the crops is entirely due to the conformation of the country. The district has a number of swamps and they grow vast stocks of rice while the higher lands between them and the riverain *diaras* produce in the cold weather the common cereals, many of them also yielding a crop of maize and

millet in the autumn. Some parts are subject to flood either by the excessive local rainfall or by the spill water of the three great rivers while in spate. But the evil effects of the floods are not as severe as those of drought.

Partially owing to the variety of crops that are grown throughout the year and partially because there is not much of canal irrigation, rainfall still controls the agricultural economy of Saran district. Famines and droughts in Saran district are usually due to scanty rainfall or a rainfall that is not well-distributed.

In the Settlement Report Mr. Kerr (1903) has shown that during the two considerable famines in Saran district, namely in 1873-74 and 1896-97, the rainfall in the years was 33.83 inches (1873) and 34.71 inches (1896), respectively, as against the normal rainfall of a little above 44 inches.* He mentions in the Settlement Report "the greater part of the deficit both in 1873 and 1896 was at the beginning and end of the rainy season. This was specially so in 1873 when only half the ordinary amount of rain was received in June, and less than one-sixth of the ordinary amount in September, in which month the rain ceased altogether. In 1896 the rains in June were slightly in excess of the normal and so again in September, but neither in this year nor in 1873 was any rain received in October, the ordinary amount received in that month being over 4 inches. In both the years January to April rains were in considerable defect, though in the following November and December the ordinary amount fell. .... In 1896 the September rain all fell before the 20th of that month and practically no rain fell thereafter till late in November: in 1873 no rain fell except a little over an inch from the end of August till January of the following year."

In 1873 there was no rainfall in Saran district during the months of October, November and December while in September there was a rainfall of 1.15 inches although in the preceding month of August there was a rainfall of 10.75 inches. In 1896 there was no rainfall in October and a very slight rainfall of 0.19 inch in November and 0.47 inch in December. These figures show that in 1873 there was a complete failure of *hathiya* rains and in 1896 there was a very substantial failure of *hathiya* rains. The scarcity condition that followed the failure in 1897 could be well-compared with the scarcity condition in the early part of 1958 due to the complete failure of *hathiya* rains in 1957.

Mr. J. H. Kerr, in the Settlement Report (1903) has described the ideal rainfall as not one which reaches or exceeds a certain annual total but one which is well distributed. The quotation below is significant even now :—

"Showers throughout the cold weather are welcome, but storms in February and March frequently damage the

* Muzaffarpur old Records edited by P. C. Roy Choudhary, Gazetteers' Revision Branch, has excerpts of letters regarding earlier years (P. C. R. C.).

flowering poppy and the earing grain. Thereafter little rain is expected or required, till the middle of May, when a good fall in the *Chota barsat* facilitates the preparation of the ground for the crops of the autumn harvest. In June and July good rain is needed to bring on the seedlings and to permit of the transplantation of the winter rice. A break from the middle of August to the middle of September will do little harm, and too much rain during this period may injure the ripening *bhadai* crops. But it is to the rainfall during the last half of September and during the *hathiya* asterism at the beginning of October that the cultivator looks forward most anxiously, for drought at this period will not only ruin the winter rice, but will deprive the thirsty soil of the moisture necessary for the following *rabi* crop. As will be seen hereafter, the interests of Saran are more equally spread over the three great harvests of the year than in the case in either Muzaffarpur or Champaran, in which large tracts are almost entirely dependent on the winter rice crop. This fact renders a kindly, and well distributed rainfall specially necessary for Saran, but on the other hand as the district is not dependent on a single crop, it frequently shows greater powers of resistance than its neighbours to the effects of a partial drought.

"As already noted, parts of Saran are subject to floods caused either by excessive local rainfall or by the overflow of the three great rivers which surround the district. The effects of the latter have already been described. The most notable case of the former was in 1871, when the total rainfall exceeded 90 inches and was nearly double the normal. But the evil effects of floods are as nothing compared with those of drought. Apart from the loss of human life and of cattle which are often insignificant, the destruction of a single crop by flood is usually compensated for by the resulting enrichment of the soil due to the deposit of silt."

The great famines in Bihar are more or less due to failure of the winter rice crop. Saran also has suffered along with the other districts in Bihar from the great famines, although Saran is least dependent on the winter rice crop than any other districts in North Bihar.* The district, however, has certain belts where winter rice is predominant. In these limited areas failure of that crop is followed by severe distress although the observations of the

* Some letters from 1783 onwards on the subject in Muzaffarpur Old Records, published from Gazetteers' Revision Branch, Bihar may be seen (P. C. R. C.).

Commissioner of this Division in his Report on the Famine of 1896-97 quoted in Kerr's Settlement Report still holds good :—

> "In Saran, as a whole, the rice is the least important crop of all and the *rabi* the most important: so that the loss of the rice was, on the whole. well made up by the *rabi*, and the district as a whole, suffered less than any of its fellows north of the Ganges."

Agriculture in this district is the gamble in the rainfall and this circumstance underlines the need of making provision for irrigation facilities.

The general consequences of failure in the periodical rains as early as 1786 could be seen from a Proceedings of the Bengal Revenue Committee, dated Calcutta, the 29th September 1783. It would appear that on the 18th September 1783 Mr. Charles Greene, Collector of Saran, had given the report regarding his district as a result of failure of the rains.* Foodgrains had practically disappeared and the *choudhuries* of the principal *ganjes* and *bazars* were personally contacted by the Collector who gave out that they were helpless as the *vyaparis* who dealt with the preliminary markets had abstained from bringing grain of their *ganjes* and *bazars*. Being satisfied as to the truth of this, the Collector ordered that their granaries be seized upon and the grains they contained would be publicly exposed to sale but this executive order failed to have the desired effect. Exportation had to be totally stopped, and a number of *chowkis* were set up at different places to enforce the prohibition. In his action the Collector was largely influenced as to the results of the famine in 1770. The 1770 famine was also due to excessive drought when even the tanks had dried up. One who is interested may pursue the matter by studying "Extracts from the Records in the India Office Library regarding the famines in India, 1769—1788, compiled by George Campbell in 1883 with the remarks of W. W. Hunter on the great famine of 1779-80 as an Appendix". The magnitude of this scarcity in the *Sarkar Saran* will be appreciated by the fact that although the original agreement was to realise Rs. 8,69,003 from the *aumil* a reduced sum of Rs. 7,40,001 was accepted.

Conditions have, however, improved to some extent to meet the situation caused by the failure of proper rainfall by the right time. Some steps have been taken for providing artificial irrigation Another large measure is the development of communications. Mr. Hunter writing about the famine in 1770, which swept away one-third of the total population, mentions "The absence of the means of inter-communication rendered an efficient distribution of the national stock impossible, even if Government had not deterred speculators from undertaking the task Importation on an adequate

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* There are letters of Charles Greene in Muzaffarpur Old Records, published from Gazetteers' Revision Branch, Bihar (P. C. R. C.).

scale was impossible for the same reason. A super-abundant harvest was as dangerous to the revenue as a bad one, for when a large quantity of grain had to be carried to market the cost of transport swallowed up the price obtained ".

Land Utilisation.

The district of Saran appears to have had a close cultivation all through owing to its situation and rich soil. In the early years of the British Administration, when not much had been done to improve the conditions of agriculture, the Collector of Saran in a report had mentioned that the district was " generally in a high state of cultivation ".† According to the Survey and Settlement Operations Report of 1915—1921, the total cultivated area of the district was 12,98,234 acres as against the reported cultivated area of 16,90,000 in 1952-53. A tabular chart indicating the classification of the areas of the district (in thousand acres) from 1952-53 to 1955-56 is given below :—

Years.	Forest.	Not available for cultivation	Other uncultivated land excluding current fallow.	Current fallow.	Net area sown.	Total area of the district.	*Bhadai* crops.	*Aghani* crops.	*Rabi* crops.	Fruits.	Potatoes.	Vegetables including root crops.	Total area sown.	Area sown more than once.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1952-53	*	2,17	40	2,23	12,33	17,13	5,27	4.00	6,71	62	14	17	16,90	4,58
1953-54	*	2,44	46	3,89	10,34	17,13	4,34	2,32	6,21	51	12	13	13,62	3,28
1954-55	*	2.16	44	2,41	12,12	17,13	4,68	3,92	5,73	50	10	11	15,04	2,93
1955-56	*	1,83	47	2,22	12,48	17.13	4,66	3,24	4,99	36	9	3	13,37	1,27

* Below 500 acres.

The common classification of the land under cultivation is under three categories, viz., the lowland, the upland and the *diara* land. In the lowland the main crop is paddy, while the upland grows paddy, barley, wheat, sugarcane, pulses and oilseeds. The lands along the banks of the rivers yield good *rabi* or cold weather crops. But the *bhadai* or autumn crops from this type of lands are liable to damage from the spill of the rivers except in the tracts to the north and east protected by the Gandak Embankment. The fertility of the *diara* lands varies. Some have great fertility and grow very good crops of wheat, barley, peas and mustard. The fertility depends on the deposits of the rivers year after year. Other

† Sarkar Saran and Muzaffarpur Old Records, published from Gazetteers' Revision Section (P. C. R. C.).

diara lands are sandy and it is just possible that the good crop of one year may be spoiled by the deposits of sand in the next.

The district has no forest area and very little of culturable waste land for reclamation. The district as a whole does not suffer from erosion, excepting erosion by river's action. The riverain tracts liable to erosion are sought to be protected by the growing of catch crops.

AGRICULTURAL PATTERN.

Before we pass on to the next section, it may be mentioned that the agricultural pattern has not changed much since J. H. Kerr, I.C.S., wrote the Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Saran district from 1893—1901 and published it in 1903. After collecting *thanawar* figures of the net-cropped area under *bhadai, aghani* and *rabi* Mr. Kerr had observed :--

> "With regard to the subdivisional figures Gopalganj shows the largest percentage under *bhadai* crops and the smallest under *aghani;* in Siwan and the Sadar the percentages of *bhadai* and *aghani* differ very little from the general percentages for the district, but *rabi* in Siwan occupies only 49 per cent of the net-cropped area as against 72 per cent in the Sadar; while Gopalganj with 63 per cent is only slightly above the district average of 62 per cent. The variations in the percentages for twice-cropped area are equally great. In Siwan only 25 per cent is twice cropped, as against 40 per cent in Gopalganj and 46 per cent in the Sadar; 17 per cent of the net-cropped area is irrigated in Siwan, 16 per cent in Gopalganj, and only 12 per cent in the Sadar.
>
> "Taking the *thanawar* figures we find that the predominance of the *rabi* crop is marked throughout. In the three thanas of the Siwan subdivision only, does the proportion fall below 50 per cent, while in Chapra it rises to 76 per cent, and in Sonepur to as much as 93 per cent. As might be expected Sonepur, with 93 per cent *rabi*, returns only 17 per cent *aghani*, most of which must be followed by such *rabi* crops as *khesari* and gram, in order to account for the large *rabi* and twice-cropped area. In Chapra thana, also, it is usual to take a second crop from winter rice lands; but the practice does not prevail to the same extent in the two northern subdivisions and, consequently, the predominance of *aghani* crops in Siwan and Darauli thanas results in a comparatively small *rabi* and twice-cropped area. In Basantpur the *bhadai* crop is more important than *aghani*, but the *rabi* and twice-cropped areas are not as large as the analogy of other thanas would lead

us to expect. The reason is said to be that the Basantpur soil is not adapted to growing *rabi*. This may be true to some extent; but I think a more reasonable explanation is that furnished by the crop statement, which show that nearly 6 per cent of the cultivated area of this thana is under indigo—a *bhadai* crop which, in the ordinary course of events, is rarely followed by a *rabi* crop.

"In Darauli the *bhadai* crop is one of comparative insignificance, only 27 per cent of the net-cropped area being accounted for by autumn crops. *Aghani*, with 43 per cent, must be treated as of the most importance, though 48 per cent is shown as *rabi*. In this thana, in addition to there being extensive rice *chaurs*, the cultivation of sugarcane, treated as an *aghani* crop, is of very considerable importance. The impossibility of following sugar with any other crop in the same year sufficiently accounts for the small percentage of area twice-cropped.

"In five, out of the ten thanas, viz., Mirganj, Gopalganj, Mashrakh, Parsa and Sonepur, *bhadai* occupies over 40 per cent and *rabi* over 55 per cent of the net-cropped area; and of these thanas it may be safely said that they are, as a whole, practically secure from famine unless a failure of the rains, resulting in disaster to the *bhadai* and *aghani* crops, is followed by a failure of the *rabi*. The Siwan subdivision, on the other hand, with its comparatively large area under *aghani* crops and small area under *rabi*, should be the first to suffer in case of a failure of the rains. At the same time famine could never be really severe for more than a few months unless the *rabi* crops failed also.

"In the remaining thanas, Manjhi and Chapra, the area under *bhadai* and *aghani* crops is equally distributed, while the percentage under *rabi* is considerably above the district average. And in these thanas, too, a severe famine is an impossibility, unless there is a failure of all harvests. The famine reports of 1874 and 1897 fully bear out the statement that it requires the complete failure of two out of the three harvests to cause anything more than distress in the district of Saran."

One of the most striking features of the district is the presence, in nearly all parts of it, of large low-lying tracts of lands in which only *aghani* rice could be grown. A failure of the *aghani* crop will mean general distress in such areas. In his report on the famine of 1897 Mr. Bourdillon, Commissioner of Patna, remarks: "General distress was averted from Saran, but in certain parts of

the district the stress was greater than elsewhere. The rice crop was the greatest failure; and hence it was in the tracts where rice was the only or the principal crop that serious distress occurred, and this circumstance accounts for the curiously variegated character of the Saran famine map." He adds in another place : " In Saran, as a whole, the rice is the least important crop of all, and the *rabi* the most important: so that the loss of the rice was, on the whole, well made up by the *rabi*, and the district, as a whole, suffered less than any of its fellows north of the Ganges". This finds support in the observation in the Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations published in 1903 :—"only one-fifth of the district is to a large extent dependent for its prosperity on the *aghani* harvest still holds, more or less, good. Every thana, except Sonepur, contains a considerable portion of the area which grows *aghani* crops and distress might be anticipated in this widely scattered villages growing *aghani* whenever there is a failure of the *aghani* crops".

Kerr's observations could be compared with the data thrown up by the Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations in this district, from 1915—1921. The Settlement Officer, P. N. Gupta, in the Final Report of the Revisional Operations (published in 1923) has quoted the following statistics of the cropped area showing the agricultural patterns :—

Name of Thana.	Bhadui. A. D.	Aghani. A. D.	Rabi. A. D.	Other Cropped area. A. D.	Total. A. D.	Dofasal. A. D.	Net-cropped area. A. D.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
GOPALGANJ SUBDIVISION—							
Mirganj	1,07,970.31	68,952.81	1,41,124.39	9,670.21	3,27,726.72	93,719.03	2,34,007.69
Gopalganj	79,425.43	55,670.40	89,992.55	6,119.35	2,31,207.73	75,704.45	1,55,503.28
TOTAL..	1,87,395.74	1,24,623.21	2,31,116.94	15,798.56	5,58,934.45	1,69,423.48	3,89,510.97
SIWAN SUBDIVISION—							
Siwan..	64,456.77	81,015.23	85,719.87	6,925.17	2,38,147.04	57,534.78	1,80,612.56
Darauli	33,588.91	47,167.57	72,927.81	6,122.50	1,59,806.79	30,037.89	1,29,768.90
Basantpur	53,925.43	52,706.70	68,319.37	6,706.71	1,81,658.21	49,814.90	1,31,843.31
TOTAL	1,51,971.11	1,80,889.50	2,26,997.05	19,754.68	5,79,612.34	1,37,387.57	4,42,224.77
SADAR SUBDIVISION—							
Manjhi..	20,567.16	26,128.96	41,961.52	4,849.78	93,507.42	27,215.59	66,291.83
Chapra	51,512.56	39,263.93	1,04,416.04	10,383.74	2,25,576.27	69,382.65	1,56,193.62
Mashrak	32,436.88	30,315.67	45,582.09	4,517.78	1,12,852.42	31,511.31	81,341.11
Parsa	46,952.97	48,742.75	83,265.02	7,957.67	1,86,918.41	57,516.62	1,29,401.79
Sonepur	12,195.05	7,426.04	28,663.85	2,786.76	51,071.70	17,801.40	33,270.30
TOTAL	1,63,664.62	1,71,877.35	3,03,388.52	30,495.73	6,69,026.22	2,03,427.57	4,06,498.65
GRAND TOTAL.	5,08,031.47	4,77,390.06	7,62,002.51	66,048.97	18,09,473.01	5,10,238.62	12,98,234.39

From the data quoted by Mr. P. N. Gupta it would appear that the pattern regarding *bhadai, rabi* and *aghani* crops retain almost the same features. The changes are expected and due to regional causes.

Mr. Gupta found Gopalganj subdivision with the largest acreage under *bhadai* and the smallest under the *aghani* crop. There is not much difference between the acreage under the *aghani* between the Sadar and the Siwan subdivisions. The Sadar subdivision continued to be the largest *rabi*-growing area as before. Siwan continued, as in Kerr's time, to be the smallest *rabi*-growing area. On the percentage basis, the area of *rabi* crops to the net-cropped area of the Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions would come to 65 per cent, 51 per cent and 59 per cent, respectively. On the average, *rabi* claims 58.50 per cent of the total cropped area in the district. Regarding the twice-cropped areas, Sadar claimed 43.7 per cent of the cultivated land as against 46 per cent mentioned by Mr. Kerr. The fall in Sadar subdivision is made up in Siwan subdivision. According to the data in the Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations, Siwan claimed 31 per cent of the total cropped area under twice-cropped category as against 25 per cent mentioned by Mr. Kerr. The percentage in Gopalganj remains almost the same. Kerr mentions 40 per cent as against 40.70 per cent by P. N. Gupta.

The *thanawar* figures of Mr. Gupta would indicate the predominance of *rabi* as was found by Mr. Kerr. The statistics mentioned by Mr. P. N. Gupta would show that out of the three thanas in Siwan subdivision, the *rabi* area is below 50 per cent of the total cropped area only in one thana. In Chapra the *rabi* area comes to 66 per cent as against 86 per cent in Sonepur thana Regarding Basantpur thana, Kerr had mentioned that *bhadai* crop is more important than *aghani* crop. But from the figures in the Revisional Settlement the difference of the acreage under *bhadai* and *aghani* is rather small. The *rabi* area mentioned by Mr. Kerr was 62,013 acres as against 68,319 acres during the Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations.

Indigo was once a major crop in this district. At the time of the original settlement, 45,000 acres were under indigo and by 1907 the area had shrunk to 11,200 acres owing to the competition of the synthetic dye. The First Great World War brought in a revival, but at the settlement of 1915—1921, the area was just under 8,000 acres. Mirganj and Siwan thanas contributed about 2,000 acres each under indigo. The increase in *rabi* acreage during the revisional settlement may also be due to a shrinkage of indigo cultivation. The indigo has been a declining industry since and in 1928-29 only three concerns grew indigo on about 1,000 acres. There is practically no indigo cultivation in 1958.

Unfortunately, there appears to be certain confusion about the relevant current statistics. We have not had any other survey and

settlement operations. There has not been any intensive economic survey embodying detailed investigation into the area under crops. The National Sample Survey or the Agricultural Statistics section of the State Government of Bihar have not had any thorough investigation as is possible during settlement operations. The State Government have now set up a Bureau of Economics and Statistics and their periodical and annual publications are to be depended upon for our purposes. Unfortunately, as we have seen in the statistics for the irrigated area, some of the statistics published in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Book*, 1955, published in November, 1958, do not appear to be quite correct. However, as we have quoted earlier, it will be seen that, according to this book, the net-cropped area of Saran district consisted of 12,48,000 acres and 4,99,000 acres were under *rabi* crops, 4,66,000 acres under *bhadai* crops and 3,24,000 acres under *aghani* crops.

These figures have to be taken tentatively as they cannot be said to have the accuracy of the data thrown out in survey and settlement proceedings. The meaning will be clear, if the figures of the net-cropped area found in the First Revisional Settlement Operations (1893—1901) are compared along with the net area of the district as in Second Settlement Operations and in the year 1955-56.

	In acres.
First Settlement, 1893—1901—	
Total area of the district	16,33,435
Net-cropped area of the district ..	12,84,010
Second Settlement, 1915—1921—	
Total area of the district	15,72,577
Net-cropped area	12,98,234
1955-56—	
Total area of the district .. .	17,13,000
Net-cropped area	10,34,000

Saran is a riverain district and there may be some changes in the available *diara* land which probably explains the difference of the figures regarding the total area of the district.

The increase in the cropped area during the Revisional Survey and Settlement Operations is quite understandable. The decrease in the net-cropped area in 1955-56, according to the publication of the Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bihar, are intriguing in face of the known facts of efforts to extend cultivation.

Similar investigations regarding the areas under different crops and in the average yield of the crops in the different periods, also

show that the current figures of the Bureau of Economics and Statistics have to be taken with caution. Nevertheless, these figures are adequate to give the picture of agricultural pattern in the district, which, on the whole, has not undergone any fundamental change.

Soils.

The following quotation from the last District Gazetteer has still its applicability :—

"The soils are alluvial and vary from the hard clay found in the low swamps, which is locally known as *bangar*, to the light sandy loan of the uplands, called *bhath*. The former grows winter rice only, while from the latter an autumn rice crop is generally obtained followed by a spring crop of cereals, pulses and oil-seeds. In the district, as a whole, these two soils are found in fairly regular proportions. *Bhath* soils predominate in the northern tracts to the west of the Jharahi river, while *bangar* soil is found in patches nearly all over the district. In this respect Saran is peculiar as in other districts of North Bihar *bangar* is confined mainly to one tract. Without seasonable rainfall and without means of irrigation, *bangar* is unproductive and the areas in which it prevails are the first to be affected and the last to recover in a season of drought. *Bhath* soil yielding as a rule two crops in the year, at the autumn and spring harvests, is much less dependent on the monsoon rainfall, owing to the greater variety of crops which it is capable of producing. A third class of soil universally recognised by the cultivators is that known as *goenr*, i.e., the land immediately surrounding the village site. This is, as a rule, highly manured and is consequently reserved for the most paying crops, such as wheat, vegetables and condiments and in the rainy season, maize and *china*.

"The cultivators have a more minute soil classification based on composition. *Bhath* is divided into *kachh, balua, matiyar,* and *balsumbhi* and *banger* into *balu* and *matiyar*; but this division is a difficult one for anyone but an expert cultivator to follow. *Usar* and *rehar* lands are those on which the saline, efflorescence, known as *reh,* comes to the surface; it is said locally that two inundations are enough to convert *usar* soil into land capable of repaying cultivation.

"The only classification recognised at the last Settlement was that of *bhith* and *dhanhar,* i.e., high and low lands, *bhith* being the same as the soil locally known as *bhath*."

The soils near about Hathua and Sidhaulia in Gopalganj subdivision and near Sitalpur in Sadar subdivision are six to eight per cent sandy, while areas near Marhowrah in Sadar subdivision are heavy loams. They contain a normal quality of soluble salts. These areas have a high potassium content, ranging from .75 per cent to one per cent. The soils near Pachrukhi and the eastern portion of Siwan subdivision are light loams but have a high content of soluble salts. The potassium content in soils of this area is also high. The carbon nitrogen ratio in the soils of Pachrukhi area in Siwan subdivision, of Marhowrah and Sitalpur areas in Sadar subdivision and of Sidhaulia area in Gopalganj subdivision is fairly high, ranging from 11 to 15 per cent, while that of areas in Hathua is normal, ranging between 9 and 11 per cent. These areas are also calcarious, containing more than 2 per cent of calamoxide.

HOLDINGS.

There appears to be a progressive decline in the average size of a holding. This is only expected because of the law of inheritance and on every death of the family head (*Karta*) there will be a further partition of the holding. But it has to be borne in mind that the diminution of the size of the average holding by itself should not be taken as the index of economic condition. An agriculturist may be a tenant with an agricultural holding, a tenure-holder or an under-*ryot* or a service-holder or a professional man.

At the time of the settlement of 1893—1901 the average size of a holding was 1.82 acres and this shrunk to 1.41 acres at the Revisional Settlement (1915—1921).

During the Revisional Settlement it was found that the average size in Gopalganj subdivision was 2.2 acres, in Sadar subdivision 1.19 acres and in Siwan subdivision 1.38 acres. There have been no further survey and settlement operations nor any computation of the holdings in any elaborate economic survey. Certain economic data were collected in the course of the Census Operations of 1931 and 1941 but there was no conclusion about the average size of holdings.

In the *District Census Handbook of Saran* published in 1956 there is a chart showing the distribution of 1,000 agricultural holdings by size of holdings based on Sample Survey of size of holdings, 1952. This chart shows that 411 holdings were up to 0.5 acre. There were 176 holdings exceeding 0.5 acre and up to 1 acre as against 193 holdings exceeding 1 acre and up to 2 acres. 93 holdings were found of the size exceeding 2 acres and up to 3 acres while in the next category of holdings exceeding 3 acres and up to 4 acres were 52 holdings. Only 25 holdings were found exceeding 4 acres and up to 5 acres. There were 43 holdings of the size exceeding 5 acres and up to 10 acres. It is significant that there were only 7 holdings out of 1,000 holdings that came within the group of 10 acres to

50 acres. This completes 1,000 holdings and there was no holding of the size exceeding 50 acres.

The results of the Sample Survey of 1,000 agricultural holdings cannot be pushed too far. Nevertheless it shows that the bulk of the holdings are up to 0.5 acre.

It could reasonably be mentioned that the size of the average holding has further gone down and may be said to be 0.25 acre which is the minimum in Bihar.

AGRICULTURAL SEASONS.

From the point of view of crops, the culturable lands in this district come under three main categories, namely, *bhadai, aghani* and *rabi*. The agricultural seasons are again connected with astral periods according to Hindu almanac. For agricultural purposes the year is divided into 27 astral periods or *Nakshatras*. *Bhadai* crops are the early or the autumn crops reaped in the month of *Bhado* (August to September), consisting of *sathi* rice, *marua*, maize, *urid, kodo, sawan*, jute, sunhemp, *til* and *jowar*. Sowing entirely depends on the advent of monsoon. If the rainfall is early the *Bhadai* crops are sown from the beginning of *Rohan Nakshatra* (approximately 25th May to 6th June) till the end of *Adra Nakshatra* (20th June to 5th July). But in the *diara* land, where the soil is usually moist, various millets are sown even in the month of April and May. The *sathi* rice is sown broadcast on high land in June or July and is regarded as 60 days' crop. The *aghani* crops mainly consist of winter paddy, millet, *moong, kurthi* and sugarcane. *Aghani* rice is sown broadcast after the commencement of the rains in the later part of June or early July in portions of the land selected for seed nursery. These plots are kept ready having been ploughed several times before. After four or six weeks, when the young seedlings are about a foot high, they are generally transplanted in the field after the soil of the field has been well puddled The transplantation usually takes place during *Punarbas—Asresa Nakshatra* (approximately 18th July to 15th August) and *Magha Nakshatra* (16th August to 30th August). At the end of *Purwa Nakshatra* (approximately 4th September to 18th September) the water is drained off and the fields are allowed to dry for about 15 days when they again require water. This practice, known as *nigar*, depends on timely rainfall for irrigation.

The *hathiya* rains (approximately 25th September to the end of first week of October) are the most important in the year. If *hathiya* fails, the crop prospects are indeed very gloomy. Not only *hathiya* rains are necessary for a successful winter crop but also to provide moisture for the sowing of the *rabi* crops. Irrigation is a rather lame substitute for *hathiya* rains.

The *rabi* crop, which is so called because it is reaped in the spring (*rabi*), includes such winter crops as wheat, barley, oats, gram,

masoor, *arhar*, *khesari*, linseed, mustard, castor, *dhania*, turmeric, ginger, potato, and other vegetables. Ploughing of the fields for the *rabi* crops commences early in the rains and is continued at convenient intervals. The time of sowing *rabi* is generally regulated by two circumstances—the heavy rains of the *Hathiya Nakshatra* (26th September to 7th October) and the approaching cold season. If sown too late, the plants will not become strong enough to resist the cold: if sown too early, the heavy rain will probably drown the seed and sprouting crop and so necessitate re-sowing. The cultivators are thus anxious to sow as soon as the heavy rains have ceased, and the general rule is that the proper time for sowing most *rabi* crops is the *Chitra Nakshatra* (8th October to 20th October) and that it must not be delayed beyond the *Swati Nakshatra* (21st October to 3rd November). Two or three showers are required for the maturity of the crops at convenient intervals, but storms in February and March frequently damage the ripening grain.

AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS.

The agricultural operations vary according to the crops, the rainfall or the availability of irrigation water and the soil. The operations consist of digging, ploughing, pulverising, manuring, sowing, weeding, interculturing, irrigating, protecting the crops from pests, birds and cattle or wild animals, harvesting, threshing and storing. Associated operations will cover bunding, levelling, trenching and draining the excess water, etc.

Ploughing could be done throughout the year generally with wooden ploughs, excepting in the hottest part of the summer. Usually, ploughing is connected with rainfall. On an average, one plough opens up one-third of an acre of land in 8 hours. Sugarcane and root crops will need a deeper ploughing up to 10 inches. For *rabi*, interval ploughing is required from the beginning of monsoon till it is sown.

Pulverisation of the soil is done by a harrow, called *chowki*. It is drawn by two or four bullocks. For manuring, the village farmer depends on the farm-yard rotten sweepings or compost or the droppings of cattle and sheep. Some organic fertilisers, particularly for sugarcane and potato, are becoming popular.

The following are the sowing periods of some of the important crops of the district and it will be seen that water is essential for a successful sowing :—

Crops.		Sowing or planting time.
Paddy	..	*Asarh*, *Sravan-Bhado* (end of July to 15th September).
Maize	..	*Jeth-Asarh* (15th June to 15th July).
Marua	..	*Jeth-Asarh* (15th June to 15th July).

Crops.		Sowing or planting time.
Rahar	..	*Jeth-Asarh* (15th June to 15th July).
Wheat	..	*Kartik-Aghan* (15th November to 15th December).
Gram	..	*Kartik-Aghan* (15th November to 15th December).
Yam	..	*Sravan* and *Kartik* (August and November).
Sugarcane	..	*Baisakh-Jeth* (May-June).
Potatoes	..	*Asin-Kartik* (October-November).

Weeding and cleaning up the fields are necessary operations. Usually weeding is done to the paddy fields during the *Purwa* (4th September to 16th September) and *Utra Nakshatra* (19th September to 2nd October). Most of the crops need two or three weedings.

Harvesting.

The period of harvesting varies from crop to crop. The statement below indicates the harvesting time for some of the important crops :—

Crops		Harvesting time.
Paddy	..	End of *Kartik-Aghan* (December).
Maize	..	*Aswin* (October).
Marua	..	End of *Bhado* (September).
Rahar	..	*Magh* and *Chaitra* (January and March).
Wheat	..	*Chaitra* (March).
Gram	..	*Chaitra* (March).
Yam	..	*Kartik* and *Magh* (November and January).
Sugarcane	..	*Kartik* to half *Baisakh* (November to April).
Potatoes	..	*Kartik* and *Magh* (November and January).

Threshing is closely associated with dry winds, and a bumper crop may be spoiled at the threshing floor for an untimely shower or the delay in the coming of the dry wind. Storing is still in almost a primitive condition so far the cultivators are concerned. The grains are stored in big earthen jars which are usually sealed up with earth. Cylindrical bins, called *thek,* made of *rahar,* castor stalk and bamboo, well plastered on all sides with cowdung and mud, are also used for storage purposes. But these methods of storage are not insect proof nor absolutely damp proof. The importance of storing with the primary cultivators lies in the fact that the cultivator does

not want to part with the produce all at once and will wait for the prices to rise. Both driage and insects are poorly guarded against. There is no State warehouse anywhere in the district till now.

PRINCIPAL CROPS.

The crops may be grouped in two divisions—food crops and non-food crops. The principal food crops of the district consist of paddy, barley, maize, gram and wheat. Various other foodgrains, such as *khesari* (*Lathyrus sativus*), *arhar* (*Ganjanus indicus*), *china* (*Panicum miliaceum*), peas, oats, *masoori* (*Lens esculenta*), *sawan* (*Ranicum frumentaceum*), *kauni* (*Setaria italica*), *urid* (*Phaseolus mungo*), *mung* (*Phaseolus mungo, Var radiatus*) and *janera* (*Sorghur vulgara*), *china* and *kauni* are also grown. The grains are husked, boiled and consumed. *Khesari*, peas and *janera* are ground to flour. They form the dietary of the poor classes. *China*, a millet, is valuable in the periods of scarcity as it is ready for cutting about six weeks after it is sown; with the exception of oats, these crops are seldom grown singly, *peas* and *masoori* being generally sown with barley, *sewan* and *kauni* with maize, *mung* with *janera* and *urid* with *kodo* and so on.

Among the non-food crops, oil-seeds (linseed, rape and mustard), sugarcane and potato are important. Sugar has replaced indigo which has completely disappeared from the district. The cultivation of potatoes is not mentioned in the last District Gazetteer of 1930, but now it is cultivated in the district. In some parts of the district tobacco, chillies, *haldi* or turmeric and other condiments are also grown. The areas near Maharajganj in Siwan subdivision are the chief centres of chillies and condiments cultivation. The chief cash crops of the district are sugarcane and potatoes. Cultivation of sugarcane is localised round the sugar factories in the district. Potatoes cover major area in Mirganj, Maharajganj, Kuchiakot, Garkha, Baniapur and Khaira police-stations of the district. Thatching grass is grown to a limited extent. Tobacco only covers 2,000 acres, *pan* or betel leaf is grown chiefly from Chirand to Sonepur.

A statement showing the areas (in thousand of acres) under principal crops in the district of Saran from 1952-53 to 1956-57 (by complete enumeration survey in Bihar) is given below :—

	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.
(1) Paddy (winter and autumn).	4,68	5,00	5,07	5 07	5,07
(2) Wheat ..	1,68	1.89	2,05	2,05	2,07
(3) Gram ..	68	80	85	85	85
(4) Barley ..	2,08	2,00	2,27	2.27	2,27
(5) Maize ..	2,54	2,89	3,17	3,17	3,17

	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.
(6) *Massoor* ..	9	12	17	17	17
(7) *Arhar* ..	1,19	1,19	1,19	1,19	1,19
(8) *Khesari* ..	21	30	34	34	34.5
(9) Peas ..	31	42	48	48	48
(10) Sugarcane ..	71	73	78	78	80
(11) Tobacco ..	1	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.1
(12) Potatoes ..	14	15	17	17	18
(13) Jute ..	3	2	1	1	1
(14) Chillies ..	*	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
(15) *Marua* ..	38	38	38	38	40

Statement showing the outturn (in thousand of tons) of principal crops (by crop-cutting experiment and eye estimate in Bihar) from 1952-53 to 1956-57 is given below :—

	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.
(1) Rice (autumn and winter).	79	84	97	97	104
(2) Wheat ..	42	43	48	48	50
(3) Gram ..	11	11	11	11	11
(4) Barley ..	51	54	58	58	61
(5) Maize ..	77	77	77	77	80
(6) *Masoor* ..	3	3	3	3	3
(7) *Arhar* ..	27	28	30	30	31
(8) *Khesari* ..	3	5	6	6	6
(9) Peas ..	7	11	12	12	12
(10) Sugarcane ..	63	63	63	63	65
(11) Potatoes ..	38	38	38	39	25
(12) Tobacco ..	*	*	*	*	*
(13) Jute ..	4	3	2	2	2
(14) Chillies ..	*	*	1	1	1

NOTE.—Reduction in yield of potato is due to hailstorm and untimely rain.

* Below 500 tons.

Table of average yield of different crops is given below :—

Names of crops.	Average yield per acre (in maunds).
Bhadai paddy	6
Aghani paddy	10
Wheat	8
Gram	6
Barley	6
Sugarcane	200
Maize	10
Pulses	5

Paddy.

According to the last District Gazetteer of 1930, an area of 700 square miles was under rice cultivation. The Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations (1915--1921) mentions 4,48.443 acres under paddy cultivation which shows that the last District Gazetteer took the figure of Survey and Settlement Operations of 1915—1921. In 1952-53 the acreage under paddy has come to 4,68,000 acres as against 5,07,000 acres in 1956-57. Thus we see that in course of three decades the area under paddy has increased by 59,000 acres. The paddy cultivated area constitutes about 38 per cent of the total area sown in the district.

Maize and Barley.

Maize and barley are grown on 20 and 16 per cent, respectively, of the cropped area. With rice they form the staple diet of the district. Barley is most extensively grown in Mirganj thana and maize in Gopalganj and Chapra thanas.

Wheat.

Wheat is raised on about 14 per cent of the net cropped area and is the most valuable of all the *rabi* food crops. It requires particular type of lands and intensive cultivation and is usually raised for sale rather than home consumption. It used to be grown most extensively in the Sonepur thana but now predominates in Mirganj, Parsa and Chapra thanas.

Arhar.

Arhar is cultivated on about 9 per cent of the net-cropped area. It is a hardy deep-rooted crop which can withstand drought and is, therefore, valuable when there is short rainfall. It requires no irrigation but is benefited by cold weather showers. When cut, the pods are thrashed and the peas are eaten as *dal*, the pods are used as fodder for cattle, while the stalks are valuable as fuel. It is extensively grown in all thanas except Chapra and Sonepur.

Gram.

Gram is grown on about 5 per cent of the net-cropped area. It is chiefly grown in south, specially in thanas of Chapra, Parsa and Mirganj.

Marua.

Marua covers 3 per cent of the net-cropped area. It is produced all over the district, except in Mirganj, Siwan and Manjhi thanas. It is the grain which is usually given to agricultural labourers when they are paid in kind. *Marua* is ground into flour for consumption.

Peas and Khesari.

Peas and *khesari* are grown on 2.5 and 1.8 per cent, respectively, of the net-cropped area. Both are consumed in the form of *sattu, dal* and cakes.

Sugarcane and Potatoes.

Sugarcane and potatoes are cash crops of the district. During the time of the Revisional Settlement the area under sugarcane cultivation was 61,200 acres as against 44,700 acres in 1908. In 1952-53 the area had reached 70,000 acres or covers about 5.5 per cent of the net-cropped area. Potatoes cover only 14,000 acres or 1.4 per cent of the net-cropped area.

Fruits and Vegetables.

Besides the crops mentioned in the foregoing pages, the district grows various fruits, vegetables and green fodder. The most distinctive fruit of Saran is the mango but the area under mango *guchhis* decreased from 71,000 acres from the time of the Cadastral Survey to a little under 60,000 acres at the Revisional Survey. Mango groves are being rapidly cut down for fuel and for getting lands for cultivation. The starting of the Sugar Mills in this district also saw to the cutting down of a large number of mango groves for fuel purposes. Transport of coal to Saran district still suffers from bottle-neck. The mango groves were formerly most extensive in Manjhi thana but now Mirganj and Chapra contain most of them. Saran stands first in Bihar in fruit cultivation; out of 3,81,000 acres in the State 62,000 or 16.3 per cent were recorded in Saran district during 1952-53. Among other fruits may be mentioned the *lichi* (*Nephelium lichi*), custard-apple (*sarifa*), jack-fruit (*katahal*), lemon, plantain, *bel* (*Aegle marmelos*), pomegranate and guava. The mango, *lichi* and *bel* fruit ripen in the hot weather, the jack-fruit in the rains, the plantain and guava almost all the year round.

Among vegetables the most important are potatoes and yams, which are grown extensively. A large number of other vegetables are raised in garden plots for household use and sale, such as the egg-plant or *baigun*, tomato, garlic, pumpkins, gourds, radishes, melons, onions and carrots, chillies, aniseed and coriander. Root crops were cultivated in 17,000 acres during 1952-53.

AGRICULTURAL LABOUR AND WAGES.

As already indicated, agriculture gives occupation to the largest percentage of the population. Heavy agricultural operations like ploughing, are done by the male labourers, while lighter work, such as reaping the crops or putting in the seeds, are shared by women and children of the family as well. The nucleus of agricultural labour is usually supplied by the cultivator's family members unless the cultivator belongs to a caste and a family where no direct cultivation is done. In that case he obtains labourers on hire. Women and children of the family learn agriculture craft more by a process of osmosis and following "seeing is learning". There is a vast population of landless agricultural labourers and they get wages either in cash or in kind or both. The present rate of wages for a male labourer is Rs. 1-8-0 per day as against Re. 1 approximately ten years back and annas 8 about twenty years back. In lieu of the wages of Rs. 1-8-0 a male labourer may be given 2½ seers of grains of different kinds. A woman or child labourer usually gets half the wages of a male labourer whether in cash or in kind. During the harvesting and threshing seasons agricultural labourer is usually paid in kind. If a labourer reaps 21 bundles of paddy or threshes 21 *paseris* of grain, he will get 1 bundle of paddy or 1 *paseri** of grain. Some landless labourers get into the permanent service of a big cultivator. A labourer on permanent or semi-permanent service of a cultivator is known as *halwaha* and is usually paid Rs. 12 to Rs. 15 per month, excluding the food and cloth. He does not share the same food with his master. Usually, he is given an advance of money for some requirements and the advance ties up the labourer to the employer till the whole amount is paid up. Ostensibly, no interest is charged for the advance but the lower rate of wages is due to the advance. It is also usual to set apart a small portion of land, not more than half an acre, for the labourer besides the wages. There is no 'tied' labour now. *Kamiauti* system, according to which labourers worked as serfs from generation to generation, has been abolished.

Agricultural labour is not regulated by any law and the agricultural labourers are free to migrate or change their masters or to take to some other profession. This mobility of agricultural population does affect the reaping of the crops. The average agricultural labourer is getting more conscious now of his rights and definitely a large number of big cultivators are in a position very different from what it was one or two decades back.

There is very little of import of agricultural labour from outside the district. As a matter of fact, it is the Saran labourers who go to other districts of Bihar in large number and cut the crops.

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* One *Paseri* means five seers.

MARKETING OF THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

Saran is a heavily populated district, the present density being 1,178 to a square mile as against 1,068 persons in 1941 census. Owing to its thick population, the agricultural produce of the district is insufficient to meet the requirements of the population within the district. As import and export in normal times is unrestricted, a certain percentage of the agricultural produce is sent out. The district has more imports than exports. As a matter of fact, if imports are prohibited the district will starve.

The first requirement for the marketing of the agricultural produce is a string of primary markets and a cheap and easy mode of communication and quick transport between the cultivation fields, threshing floor and the primary markets. There has been a very great progress in connecting up the rural areas with the townships or thanas. In spite of this, much has yet to be done to connect many of the rural areas with the villages that offer the primary markets. When crops are cut down, it is easy to take a bullock-cart through the fields but when the crops are standing the position is different. There are still hundreds of villages that are not connected by a road with the main road nearby.

The bullock-cart continues to be the chief mode of transport from the agricultural fields to the threshing grounds in the villages. The same pair of bullocks used for the plough are used for the cart. Head-loads for small quantities are also common. Bullock-carts again take the agricultural produce from the village to the primary markets. The village *hats* and there are a large number of them, offer the primary markets for the agricultural produce. Wholesalers usually buy from these primary markets or there are small *Vyaparis* or dealers who buy the stock from the village *hats* and take the stuff to the secondary markets. Public or Private Carrier Trucks have also come into use for transport of agricultural produce.

Primary markets do not have storage facilities nor is there any scientific grading of goods. The secondary markets are commercially more important. Some of the important secondary markets are Dighwara, Marhaurah, Manjhi, Revelganj Bazar, Hansrajpur, Mahrajganj, Siwan, Mirganj, Thawe, Sasamusa, Jalalpur, Dighwa-dubauli, Gopalganj, Barauli, Chapra Bazar and Parsa Bazar. Usually there are storage facilities in the shape of godowns, *pucca* or *kutcha*, in most of these secondary markets. The wholesale dealers at these markets keep the stock for a considerable time and release it according to the needs of the market. There is some sort of grading of goods in these secondary markets but still it cannot be said that the grading is very scientific. Usually the secondary markets are connected by good roads with the nearest railway station or a bigger market. Trucks and bullock-carts are the usual means of transport. Some of the secondary markets have a transaction of thousands of maunds of grains in a single day. Most of the secondary markets have extra transport facilities for particular days when *hats* are held.

Transport by water and the railways is important for Saran. The riverine trade in the past gave commercial importance to Chuprah, Revelganj and other towns. The railways have affected the volume of trade by water to some extent. Some of the important markets in the district are connected by trains. Turnover of goods traffic by railways has been covered in the chapter on Communication.

Standardisation of weights and measures has been taken up. Previously there used to be a number of weights and measures. Metric system of weights and measures has been introduced throughout the country from the year 1958 but is not being insisted upon at this moment. It is also going to affect this district. It will take time for a complete changeover to metric system from the existing systems of weights and measures

Agricultural Finance.

Agricultural indebtedness in this district, as in other districts, is partially inherited and partially contracted by the present cultivator. An appreciable portion of the farmers' debts is due to uneconomic reasons or circumstances unconnected with the agricultural operations, such as family bereavement and the consequent *sradh*, marriage, some litigation, either in his time or in his predecessor's time. The very nature of the circumstances that control agriculture in this district, as in other districts of the State, involves a sudden unforeseen circumstance like flood, drought, epidemics, etc., which leave no other option but to contract a debt. The unit of production in agriculture is essentially a one-man's show. Agriculture remains scattered, individualistic, small-scale and chaotic in the sense that agricultural success is still a gamble of nature. Besides uncertainty about production, the supply is inelastic, as it cannot be adjusted to the fluctuations in demand. Agriculture of an individual cannot raise capital by subscription or on the basis of estimated production. The credit available to an agriculturist is essentially a personal credit or at best the credit of his family, if it is joint. Short-term credit may be necessary to meet immediate expenses of cultivation and long-term credit of a larger amount may be needed for purchase of cattle, implements or some solid land improvements. There is hardly a cash balance of any considerable amount in the hands of the average middle class agriculturists. Every agriculturist of this group has to meet expenditure on other heads such as children's education, social obligation, etc., from his income of the land. The unit available to the agriculturists of this type for carrying on agricultural operations is also getting smaller. A son sent to the school is a loss for working on the field and the head of the family has to depend on hired labour which is growing more expensive. The cost of agricultural operations is also on the increase. These are some of the reasons why instead of a liquidation of agricultural indebtedness, the increasing tendency has continued in the last five

decades or more since Kerr's report of the First Settlement Operations was published.

In his report Kerr had mentioned that the indebtedness of the Saran peasantry as a whole could not be considered to be a serious matter. Kerr's conclusion was very tentative. It would appear that he took into account particularly the statistics of mortgages. He found that only 5½ per cent of the total *raiyati* area was mortgaged and that only 15 per cent of the total number of holdings were affected, either in whole or in part, by mortgages on the land. He concluded that the total indebtedness of the *raiyats* was about Rs. 50,00,000 or a little more than one-tenth of the value of the gross outturn in an ordinary year. Kerr differed from Mr. Tytler, his collaborator in the settlement proceedings, who held that 95 per cent of the *raiyats* lived and died in debt. According to Tytler the majority of the agriculturists were born in debt and made no effort to pay off the debt.

It is difficult to agree with Kerr because he had not taken into account a number of factors which indicate the incidence of indebtedness. He only concentrated on the mortgages. He did not take into account the incidence of sale of lands, loans contracted from Government Agencies or sale of movable properties like cattle or ornaments in a particular year. He had not taken into account the loans that had been contracted in a particular year from sources other than Government Agencies or the *mahajans* on security of lands, such as *sahukar* or Kabuli money-lenders or *mahajans* who usually would give loan without any security and charge a very high rate of interest. These factors did exist in Kerr's time as they do now. Even if not conclusive, the first settlement report makes out that agricultural indebtedness was a regular feature and opinion differed whether it was a serious matter or not. In the final report of the Revisional Settlement there was no conclusive or tentative conclusion regarding indebtedness. It was merely stated that the enormous indebtedness was the result of the operation of the high rate of interest combined with the inherent improvidence of the people.

It is difficult to come to any definite conclusion now as there has not been any proper survey of the economic factors in Saran district. We have, however, seen that the area of the average holding has been reduced, rent has been increased and the cost of agricultural operations has gone up. The standard of the agriculturists has also gone up in one sense and deteriorated in another. His expenditure has now certain avenues which were unknown before. Taking all this into consideration, an enquiry would have been extremely useful in order to indicate the incidence of indebtedness at the present time. We have, however, before us certain statements in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-Books*, 1950, 1951 and 1955, published by the Director of Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Bihar. There is

a statement showing the number in respect of *raiyati* holdings, having occupancy rights transferred by registered deeds of sale in the district of Saran for 1948, 1950 and 1955. There is a second statement showing amounts advanced under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, and Agriculturists' Loans Act. 1884. for 1947-48, 1950-51 and 1953-54. The third statement shows the number of licenses issued and amount of loans advanced under the Bihar Money-Lenders Act. These tables are given at the end of this section.

We have also to take into consideration the loans given by the Co-operative Societies for the years 1949-50, 1950-51 and 1952-53.

It is recognised that there may be other unrecorded loans from friends or sale of ornaments or loans from unlicensed money-lenders. But the tables quoted at the end of the section give us some workable ideas regarding the extent of agricultural indebtedness. Table I quoted at the end shows that the transfer of occupancy rights by registered deeds of sale involved. either in part or in entirety, an area of 9,395.47 acres in 1948, 8,136.18 acres in 1950 and 9,662.73 acres in 1955. The data are insufficient but, if any conclusion can be drawn, it may be said that during 1950—1953 there was a constant general pressure to raise money by selling lands. The consideration money involved in such dealings in those years were Rs. 1,10,07,377, Rs. 1,17,32,422 and Rs. 1,33,04,822, respectively. The consideration money will show a trend in appreciation of land value.

Table II gives the different types of loans from Government Agencies. The advances under Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, etc., amount to Rs. 21,837 in 1947-48, Rs 4,66,445 in 1950-51 and Rs. 1,41,84,481 in 1953-54. Taking these figures as reliable, it has to be said that the fluctuation appears considerable. Probably, the reason is in the particular economic condition of that year, for example, drought. scarcity conditions, floods, etc

The loans advanced under the Money-Lenders Act, as in Table III, amount to Rs. 3,17,52,290 in 1949-50, Rs. 3,54,56,974 in 1950-51 and Rs. 3,35,45,826 in 1952-53.

Selecting the year of 1950-51, it is seen that the total of the figures of loans under various sources and the consideration money received, as mentioned in the Tables I to III, comes to Rs. 4,76,26,901 In this total, an amount of gratuitous relief money of Rs. 28,940 has been excluded from Table II. We are excluding the amount of loan that was received from the Co-operative Societies from this calculation. We tentatively set apart the loans from Co-operative Societies as such loans are very seasonal and advanced for particular purposes. The average agriculturist also pays off some debts or interest thereto, for contracts in the past and this may for our calculation be set off against the loans from Co-operative Societies.

In this calculation the total recorded borrowings in Saran district for 1950-51 comes to Rs. 4,76,26,901. This figure could be compared exactly with Kerr's 50 lakhs. We do not have the statistics

of mortgages and the borrowings raised on mortgages which Kerr had; he did not have statistics of the loans we have taken into account. In money value, Kerr's 50 lakhs could easily be taken to mean more than 2 crores at the present time. No definite conclusion can be arrived at for reasons indicated before but it may safely be asserted that the incidence of agricultural indebtedness has not been on the wane at all, rather it appears to be increasing, which is a very important feature in the agricultural economy of the district.

Regarding the availability of credit, there has not been much change in the set-up of the financing agencies, although the State has tried to come to the rescue of the debtors in some ways. Whenever in need, the agriculturist thinks of the village *mahajans* first, who would give him money at just the opportune moment. The immediate urgency makes the agriculturist accept loans even with an exorbitant interest, occasionally deducted for some terms, when the advance is given. The village *mahajans* exactly know the monetary position of the loanee and his eyes are on the agriculturist's property. The next choice is the local *sahukars* or *baniyas,* who generally advance money on the pledge of ornaments of gold or silver. No cattle or any other form of liquid assets is accepted by the *baniyas.* Here also the provision is quick but the rate of interest is high and often swallows the security itself. The third source will be the loans given by the banks. Very few banks now advance money on the pledge of agricultural land The Co-operative Societies, however, advance such loans. There are certain type of loans available under Statutory Acts like Land Improvement Loans Act or Agriculturists' Loans Act or Natural Calamities Loans Act. But to obtain them, there are lots of formalities to be observed like putting in proper applications in the prescribed forms, local verification, etc., before any loan is advanced. The agriculturist has to run to the administrative headquarters several times before he can get any advance under these Acts. There is, therefore, a natural antipathy for the agriculturists in going for such loans under normal circumstances. But, occasionally, when there is a severe drought or flood or an earthquake, the administrative authorities make the loans quickly available, cutting out a lot of time-lag.

Regarding the rate of interest, the *Revisional Survey and Settlement Report* by Mr. P. N. Gupta mentions that " There are ordinarily three kinds of interests. All loans in cash and kind are subject to compound interest unless given on a mortgage of land or trees—

(*a*) Ordinary *mahajani* interest varies from annas 8 to Rs. 2 per cent per month or 6 per cent to 24 per cent per annum.

(*b*) *Sawai* or 25 per cent per annum.

(*c*) *Athrahaoni* or 50 per cent per annum."

Besides the rates given above, of which the rate quoted in (*a*) has gone up and varies between Rs. 2 to Rs. 3-2-0, there are certain other rates also. The *Kabuli* money-lenders charge one anna per rupee per month as interest, some persons charge four annas per rupee per trip of the man taking money, without consideration of actual time, which generally does not exceed beyond a few months. The Pathan and Sindhi money-lenders, according to the *Report of the Bombay Banking Enquiry Committee,* quoted in the Rural Economy of Guzrat, by Mr. M. B. Desai, "are severe in their dealings with the farmers and the rates charged by them are reported to be 20 to 50 per cent per annum", which are generally uniform everywhere. There are no Sindhi money-lenders in the district.

In order to check usury, the Bihar Money-Lenders Act was passed in 1938 requiring the *mahajans* to take a license from the Government and to maintain a proper register. The rate of interest was also regulated to 9 per cent for secured and 12 per cent for unsecured per annum.

The Co-operative Movement, however, has not attained a proper success because of various reasons which have been covered separately.

The Co-operative Societies also, no doubt, with the help of the State Government, play a distinct role in the agricultural finance. Regarding this system, Mr. P. N. Gupta in his *Revisional Report on Survey and Settlement* (1915—1921), mentions that "the system of co-operative credit, however, has obtained a considerable hold and is making good headway now in the Gopalganj and Siwan subdivisions. It is, however, evident that as yet co-operative societies have merely touched the fringe of agricultural indebtedness and the amount given out on loan is only a small fraction of the total amount borrowed in the district".

The *District Gazetteer of Saran,* revised by A. P. Middleton, published in 1930, mentions that "the movement started in Siwan subdivision, where four societies were registered in May, 1913. By February, 1915, the number was 12, which by 1928 had risen to 228 with 5,247 individual members. Their working capital is over Rs. 10½ lakhs, paid-up capital over Rs. 5½ lakhs and reserve fund a little over a lakh. The rise of the Siwan Central Bank, which is reported to be one of the best in the province, is equally remarkable; it was started in 1915, with a capital of Rs. 10,000 and 12 societies under it, it now has 236 village societies, a working capital of Rs. 9¼ lakhs, a reserve fund over Rs. 60,000, other reserves of Rs. 20,000. Its paid-up capital has risen from Rs. 2,480 in 1915 to Rs. 1,01,240 in 1928". Regarding Gopalganj subdivision, this Gazetteer mentions that the total number of societies were 158 and the membership of 2,897. "Their working capital is nearly Rs. 5 lakhs, paid-up capital half a lakh, and reserve and other funds another half a lakh. A Central Bank is run here with a working

capital of Rs. 20,000, which has now risen to Rs. 5 lakhs". In Sadar subdivision, the Gazetteer goes on to mention that "there are now 100 societies with a working capital of Rs. 3½ lakhs, paid-up share capital of Rs. 45,000 and reserve and other funds of Rs. 17,000".

The pace of progress of the co-operative societies and their role in the agricultural finance becomes clear, by the Table below:—

Co-operative Movement in the district of Saran as at 30th June, 1957.

Name of Societies.	No. of Societies.	Total membership.	Share capital.	Reserve capital.	Working capital.	Loans given in 1956-57.	Loans outstanding in 1956-57.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.		
Multi-purpose Agricultural Co-operative Credit Societies.	1,002	39,427	4,06,806	3,08,840	22,41,023	..	..
Co-operative Farming Societies.	1	15	28,005	..	79,683	..	..
Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies.	2,161	1,05,866	3,01,948	2,63,195	13,01,102	..	..
Cane Marketing Unions	25	2,101	82,200	8,53,684	20,78,111	..	..

TABLE I.

Statement showing the number in respect of raiyati *holdings having occupancy rights transferred by registered deeds of sale in the district of Saran.*

	Entire.				In part			
Year.	No.	Area transferred (in acres).	Annual rent payable to landlord.	Consideration money.	No.	Area transferred (in acres).	Annual rent payable to landlords	Consideration money.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			Rs.	Rs.			Rs.	Rs.
1948	2,889	1,316.59	7.449	14.76,396	18,189	8.078.88	40,702	95,30,981
1950	3,175	926.88	9.890	16,90,271	17,422	7,209.30	33,629	1,01,42,151
1955	1,876	1,164.28	5,140	2,74,968	21,596	8,496.45	38,407	1,80,29,854

TABLE II.

Statement showing amount advanced under the Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883, and Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884, in the district of Saran.

Year.		Under Land Improvement Loans Act, 1883.	Under Agriculturists' Loans Act, 1884.	Under Natural Calamities Loans Act.	Under Gratuitous Relief.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1947-48	..	..	21,837	..	..
1950-51	..	20,000	4,04,000	13,505	28,940
1953-54	..	84,327	1,41,00,154	..	.

TABLE III.

Statement showing the number of licenses issued and amount of loan advanced under the Bihar Money-Lenders Act in the district of Saran.

Year.		No. of licenses issued during the year.	Amount of loan advanced.		
			With security.	Without security.	Total.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1949-50	..	399	2,85,51,515	32,00,775	3,17,52,290
1950-51	..	390	3,28,72,663	25,84,311	3,54,56,974
1952-53	..	3,527	2,50,61,935	84,83,891	3,35,45,826

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY.*

The incidence of agricultural economy was discussed in the First Settlement Report of Mr. Kerr in 1903 with the help of the statistics that the Settlement Operations threw up. Mr. Kerr depended on a number of statistics gathered by Mr. Coupland and Mr. Tytler and others and tried to come to certain tenable conclusions regarding the outturn and expenses of cultivation on the principal crops. His conclusion was that the cultivator was left in an ordinary year with a profit of Rs. 25-10-0 for each acre of his holding. It is interesting to observe that Kerr's conclusion was that a family with three acres of land would be fairly comfortable He also came to the conclusion that the average size of the holding of a family of a pure cultivator is 3.8 acres. In spite of the inadequacy of data, he

* Several letters on the subject from 1783 in Muzaffarpur Old Records, published from Gazetteers' Revision Branch, Bihar. are of interest for this section (P. C. R. C.).

looked into the question of indebtedness and disagreed with Mr. Tytler's opinion that 95 per cent of the *raiyats* lived and died in debt. Kerr looked into the statistics of mortgages and found that only 5½ per cent of the total *raiyati* area was mortgaged and that only 15 per cent of the total number of holdings were affected either in whole or in part by mortgages on the land. His conclusion was that the total indebtedness of the *raiyats* of Saran district was well under a crore of rupees as the gross annual profits derived by the *raiyats* from the cultivation, after the payment of the rents, were Rs. 3½ crores. Kerr thought that the indebtedness of the Saran peasantry, as a whole, could not, therefore, be considered as a very serious matter.

Although Kerr was of the opinion that four-fifths of the pure cultivators were not in debt at all or were not sufficiently involved to be compelled to part with their land for the purposes of raising money, he thought that the district could not possibly support any addition to the agricultural community without immediate deterioration of the condition of that community as a whole. This is a very important conclusion. If in 1903 the district had come to the optimum point, so far as the agricultural prosperity is concerned, what must be the position now? Kerr's further opinion was that, excepting Gopalganj subdivision, the other areas had been well saturated with population and he meant that any further increase would mean a decline in agricultural prosperity. The population of the district has enormously grown since 1903. Saran district being already closely cultivated at the time of the last Survey and Settlement Operations, it cannot be said that the outturn of the crops could have been very largely increased by reclaiming any considerable size of culturable waste lands.

It is true that by better agricultural methods, seeds, etc., the outturn is expected to have increased. Even admitting that land use has been more intense, better controlled and more crops are definitely raised, it will not be an adequate reply to Kerr's conclusions, if they are correct.

Kerr had before him the population figure for 1901 census, which was 24.09,365. The decade following 1901 recorded a big fall in population, reducing the figure to 22,89,699 (1911 census). In 1921 census the population showed a somewhat upward trend and was recorded at 23,40,222. This upward trend was maintained as shown in the subsequent census of 1931, 1941 and 1951. The factors that were responsible for reducing the population up to 1921 were waves of epidemics, scarcity and famine conditions due to droughts, etc. This consequent reduction in the population was responsible in keeping back the results that Kerr had anticipated. In 1951 census, a population of 31,55,144 was recorded. Normally, if the famines and epidemics had not intervened, the population now would have been much more.

The pressure of population has increased in spite of emigration figures. The emigration figures in 1921 and 1931 were 2,09,890 and 48,770, respectively. The immigration figures for these two censuses were 44,736 and 50,306, respectively. The density of the population per square mile in Saran district is the highest in the State of Bihar, according to the census of 1951. It works out at 1,178 per square mile as against the density of 1.068 persons in 1941. It is true that emigration has acted as a cushion to absorb to some extent the ill-effects of a rapidly increasing population. The recent figures of emigration beyond the State are not available. There is no reason to think that emigration has fallen. In any case the birth-rate within the district and immigration have to some extent counteracted the release of the population pressure by emigration.

The answer to the question as to why the consequences visualised by Kerr are not so apparent lies in a number of factors. Although the district still remains mainly agricultural, there has been a certain amount of development in the industries allied with agriculture. The sugar mills and the other factories, run by power, form a new phase. No country or part of a country can remain progressively prosperous in the present day circumstances, if it remains exclusively agricultural. There has to be an agro-industrial economy and avenues of occupation other than agricultural. Another factor is the rapid opening up of the district which has brought the district more closer to the State and to other parts of the Indian Union than before. Surplus or deficit in one part of a district could now be much more easily met than in Kerr's days. If Saran district or a part of the Saran district suffers from acute drought and bleak prospect of crops, another part of the district or the State or another State outside the limits of Bihar, where the circumstances may be different, will come in for aid. There is a much closer bond now between the different States in the Indian Union and the Centre than before. Another answer to Kerr's apprehension is in the series of development measures taken by the State or by the Centre for the betterment of the district and the State of Bihar generally. It is true that some of the experiments in the last one decade like Grow-More-Food Campaign, etc., did not meet with all-round success. But the experience gathered even in failures has been useful. The current programme of the State Government and the Centre in starting a districtwise development programme through the Community Projects and N. E. S. Blocks in the First and Second Five-Year Plans as the base has the ideas which must have struck many administrators like Kerr.

The two Five-Year Plans were preceded by some much-needed reforms in agrarian laws. The question of effecting essential reforms in tenancy laws, which are so very vitally connected with agriculture, was taken up after 1947, when the Congress Ministry assumed the reins of the Government. Various amendments were made to the existing laws of the time. Occupancy status was extended to any

settled *raiyat* of the village if he cultivated *bakast* land of the landlord. The landlord was asked to give preference to persons residing in the village or in the neighbouring villages in settling *bakast* lands. It was laid down that the rent must not exceed 10 per cent of the average village rate and the *salami* should not exceed ten times the rental. The occupancy tenants were given full rights for excavating tanks and wells and of constructing buildings on their own lands for their own use and also for religious and charitable purposes. Full rights over trees in the holdings, for which cash rent was paid, were given to the tenants. The privilege of sending rent by postal money-orders was extended to the tenants. It was made obligatory on the landlord to furnish a full account of the rent payment to the *raiyat*, failing which, he was made liable for penalty. A share-cropper was allowed to take eleven-twentieth of the produce of the land plus the straw, while the landlord's share was limited to nine-twentieth.

Besides taking these steps, the State Government had also passed the Bihar *Bakast* Disputes Settlement Act, 1947. The object of this Act was to settle, by arbitration, disputes over *bakast* lands between landlords and *raiyats*. Another measure was the passing of the Bihar Privileged Persons' Homestead Tenancy Act, 1947. The object of this Act was to prevent forcible ejectment of *harijans*, artisans and other poor persons from their homesteads.

But all the steps taken together, could not very much ameliorate the condition of the agriculturists, who were the bulk of the population. The condition of the agricultural labour also did not improve much. The gross rental value of estates and tenures went on increasing and thereby the burden on the actual tillers also grew. The condition of the agricultural tenants of this district along with the other districts of the State could be appreciated if it is mentioned that the total amount of land revenue in the State in 1952 was 1.51 crores, out of a total revenue receipt of 25.41 crores. The zamindars, as a class, with the array of tenure and sub-tenure-holders, prospered, while the cultivators languished. With the growth of population and increase in cultivation, the margin between the total rent collected by the landlords and the amount paid to Government as fixed revenue had very considerably increased and had also given rise to the class of absentee landlords creating tenures and the tenure-holders, on their turn, creating sub-tenures and ultimately the agricultural tenants were left more or less to the mercy of subordinate *amlas* (collecting agents). The gross agricultural income per head of the agricultural population of Saran district, based on 1951 census figures, was Rs. 48, according to the Director, Central Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Bihar. This agricultural income is much more than Kerr's estimate of Rs. 25 in 1903. But when one considers the enormous increase in the prices for the essential commodities and the cost of carrying on agricultural operations, this

income cannot be said to be much of an improvement on Kerr's figures.

This was the reason why the abolition of zamindari system for the State was taken into hand. A brief coverage of this move is necessary here, as all that is associated with agriculture are bound to be affected closely by the abolition of the system. In 1946, the Bihar Legislative Assembly had passed a resolution for the abolition of landlordism. In pursuance of this, the State Acquisition of Zamindari Bill, 1947, was introduced in the State Legislature. The name of the Bill was later changed into the Bihar Abolition of Zamindari Bill, 1947, and on being passed by both the Houses of the State Legislature, it was reserved for the assent of the Governor-General. The Bill was referred back to the State Legislature with the recommendation that it might be reconsidered in the light of the amendments agreed to in a mutual discussion between the representatives of the Central and the State Governments. The amendments were adopted by both the Houses in Bihar Legislature and the Governor-General's assent to the Bill was given on June 6, 1949, and it was published as an Act called the Bihar Abolition of Zamindaris Act of 1948. The validity of the Act was challenged by certain landlords and injunctions were issued, restraining the State Government from implementing the scheme. It was felt that the Act had not made proper provision for land reforms and the Bihar Abolition of Zamindaris Act was repealed and a new Bill, called the Bihar Land Reforms Bill, 1949, was introduced in the State Legislature. This was duly passed and received assent of the President of the Republic on December 11, 1950, and was published as the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. The validity of the Act was challenged at the Patna High Court, which declared it to be unconstitutional and void on the ground that it contravened Article 14 of the Constitution of India. The matter was then considered afresh in consultation with the Government of India and it was decided to amend the Constitution of India, as land reforms could not be held back any further. The Constitution was accordingly amended by the enactment of the Constitution (First) Amendment Act, 1951, which, *inter alia*, provided for the validation of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, notwithstanding any judgment, decree or order of any court or tribunal to the contrary. The validity of this Amendment Act was again challenged but ultimately the Supreme Court decided that the Constitution (First) Amendment Act, 1951, was a valid law. Immediately after the judgment of the Supreme Court, the State Government decided to give effect to the scheme and, to start with, all estates and tenures, with gross annual income exceeding Rs. 50,000, were decided to be taken over in the first phase. There was again some litigation by the landlords but the Supreme Court finally pronounced the Act to be valid legislation, barring a part of section 4 (*b*) and 23 (*i*) (*f*). But it decided that those sub-sections were severable from the rest of the Act. The State has now taken

over all the zamindaris. Saran district had a few very big landlords and a large number of smaller zamindars and other intermediaries. All their estates were taken over by the State. This Act did away with the zamindars, who may well be described as a cushioned, protected and fortunate minority that took away the most from the lands without any contribution. The abolition of zamindaris is a landmark in agrarian history of Bihar, the importance of which will be realised more through the passage of time. The Permanent Settlement was absolutely an outmoded system, as the zamindars extracted as much as 90 per cent of the soil and the system went on breeding middlemen. The tenants became more indebted and the agriculturists really carried the burden of all the other strata of society. The step was the beginning of following a calculated agrarian policy, which would ultimately change very considerably the agricultural pattern. It will cover the size of holdings, consolidation of lands, modes of farming, land management, indebtedness, labour, agricultural price and be linked up with a policy to do away with the exclusive agricultural economy of a district. The Planning Commission at the India level has been working at this and the State Government have linked up their resources for implementing a series of schemes, which would pull out the purely agricultural economy from its present state. The change-over of the character of the State into a welfare State has naturally accelerated the efforts in this direction. These steps also will do away with the parochialism in the economy of the district. The agriculture and irrigation of the Saran district, as also of the other districts in Bihar, are no longer a local problem but a problem which has to be appreciated with the background of the State and beyond. People's co-operation is absolutely necessary for the upgrading of the agricultural conditions just as the conditions in the other features that constitute life in the district. The Development projects are determined to bring about a change in the villages and in the district and will try to liquidate social backwardness, poverty, ignorance and unemployment. Side by side, the industrialisation of the district, opening up of multi-purpose projects in the district or in the State or outside and other measures will bring about conditions to safeguard the economy of the people. The agricultural produce for industries has still to be used fully within and outside the district. Since the irrigable capacity of private watering systems had fallen considerably below the pre-war level, steps have been taken to give new sources of irrigation, such as, tube-well. True, associated with the high rates, there have been disputes between Governmental distributing agencies and peasants. But, when no water was available in the drought of 1957-58, the peasants' allergy to tube-well wore down. This shows that the peasants will be tube-well minded if only the rates are a bit reduced. The future of agriculture in this district is largely in wells, tube-wells, canals and Gandak Project irrigation.

Mention has also to be made of the accent that is being given now to family planning in the villages. With the present birth-rate, the population-increase will make all development steps useless. Through Community Projects and N. E. S. Blocks, Primary Health Centres and other institutions, the need of family planning is being carried to the agriculturists.

An investigation was recently made by a team of researchers. The National Council of Applied Economic Research in its first Techno-Economic Survey, conducted in Bihar in 1957, had stressed the central weakness of the agricultural base to provide adequate food for the population. The team had also suggested an Inter-State Board to help migration, particularly from the districts of North Bihar, to relieve the pressure on land and inter-State migration for economically balanced districts between agriculture and industry. It has been suggested that there should be a permanent migration of 1.5 million people or 8 per cent of the 18 million population of North Bihar. This suggestion has taken a gloomy view of the position. The implementation of this suggestion is not yet necessary but, in order to avoid this type of forced migration, in future we have to bring about conditions for a more balanced economy of the people within and outside the district. The observations of the National Council of Applied Economic Research are based on the statistics maintained by the departments concerned, after a scientific processing. Any enquiry of this type will naturally call for the past figures and unfortunately there is much to be desired in the way statistics have been collected. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics has been sponsored since 1952 only and has not yet been able to get a proper set-up, ensuring very reliable figures. We have seen for ourselves the incorrect figures of irrigated areas in the districts which are discussed elsewhere.

Another factor, affecting agricultural economy, is State trading in the agricultural produce. Paddy Levy Schemes or other allied schemes are imposed from time to time, particularly in a bumper crop year. Very often, this drives the grains underground. The machinery at the lowest level for such State trading has yet to be properly organised.

The agricultural economy of the district shall continue to be widely affected by emigration. The people of Saran have widely emigrated not only to the other districts of Bihar but also to practically all the States in India and beyond. As a matter of fact, it is commonly mentioned that the Saran people are to be found in almost every part of the world where Indians have emigrated. The emigrated population send out a large sum of money every month to their relatives in the district. The other important factor is that, although a very heavily populated and a deficit area, Saran has, on its borders, the two surplus districts of Champaran and Shahabad, which have fed and would continue to feed the heavy population of Saran.

The following words of Mr. Wolf I. Ladejinsky, an American Expert on agrarian reforms to Government of India, are applicable to this district word for word: " Only by industrialisation and the consequent siphoning off some agricultural labour, coupled with a sharp rise in agricultural productivity, can a real dent be made in the vicious circle of more people, less land and growing poverty ".

CHANGING PATTERN.

Before this section is brought to a close, another reference may be made to the changing patterns in agriculture and agriculturist. It is not possible to arrange the changes in an order of priority as they are interacting to each other. With the changes in the agricultural system, land tenures, abolition of zamindari, caste structure, etc., we have a pronounced changing pattern in the agriculturist. The owner of the land, whether cultivating it himself or through hired labour, can no longer have the prerogative of " tied labour ". He has been freed from the *zulum* of zamindars but he may find the State *karamcharis* in charge of the collection of rent unhelpful as before. This will disappear under closer supervision. The caste structure has become weak and by right of caste alone an agriculturist of a so-called higher caste can no longer be considered as the leader of the village. There has been an emphasis on cultivation of cash crops. Sugarcane, chillies and tobacco have attracted more the attention of the cultivator. There is a good deal of price fluctuations in these cash crops and yet the attraction has not waned. Along with the cash crops grown, a number of industries, small and large, like oil-pressing, *gur*-making and sugar mills, have become common. Wages are now paid in money rather than in kind. Labourers are more independent and much more mobile than their predecessors a decade back. Tied labour whether called *kamiauti* system or by any other name has been liquidated. There is certainly more of credit facilities in the *mofussil*. The constant land partition owing to the inheritance laws has been sought to be stayed by co-operative farming. The index of urbanisation is going up and this affects agriculture indirectly.

The advent of the war had placed large money in the hands of the lower castes. The villagers who made money by utilising the war, either themselves or through relatives, had mostly invested the savings in buying up land. The prices of various kinds of lands have risen considerably. The agriculturist's previous social stigma has often been turned to advantage. Landless labourers can almost dictate their terms of wages now. Even with the dearth of white collared jobs, the farmer's son, who is probably a non-matriculate, will not take to the plough but try his luck in quest of service. Government service, although uneconomic, has a prestige value in the village. There has been an unexpected distribution of money and the citadel of casteism is slowly being undermined by the amount of wealth in one's hand. There is a distinct upgrading of the

agriculturist as a man. The changes have weakened the forces among the poorer sections who have not always been able to adjust themselves to the changing pattern and consequently there is often a tension of the nerves and clash of ideas. It is expected that the tension will subside with the general improvements that have been started. Economic power is no longer concentrated in the possession of land rights.

What are the incentives behind land use in the villages of this district? Food and clothing occupy the bulk of the expenses of a village agriculturist. Very little is spent on tobacco, betel, tea or alcohol drink Fuel and lighting form a very small percentage. Cultivation cost, interest on loans, journeys and ceremonies take away portion of the expenditure. Medical and education expenses are almost insignificant in the budget unless the agriculturist's family is of a higher class. Litigation at times becomes unavoidable. Ceremonies are occasional visitations which take away a considerable part of the budget. With the changed pattern the agriculturist of the future is expected to have more of security, leisure, places of relaxation like tea shops in the villages or *hats*, better food and clothing There has been no proper survey on these lines on any large scale and in scientific manner.

Agriculture Department.

The district organisation of Agriculture Department has the District Agricultural Officer at the head of the section. The District Agricultural Officer works under the Deputy Director of Agriculture, who has his headquarters at Muzaffarpur and the Director of Agriculture, Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna. Broadly, the Agriculture Department has three-fold functions within the district, namely, agricultural extension and development, education and researches. The first item may further be sub-divided into the general function and the sugarcane improvement schemes. Under the District Agricultural Officer there are Subdivisional Agricultural Officers in each of the three subdivisions. There are Agricultural Inspectors for each *thana* of the subdivision. There are subordinate field workers known as *kamdars* under the Inspectors.

Agricultural extension and development is now a major responsibility of the Block Development Officers. Supply of good seeds, manures, better type of agricultural implements, fertilisers, educating the villagers of better types of cultivation methods, Japanese or Chinese ways of paddy sowing, etc., are some of the functions of the Block Development Officers and under them the men of the Agriculture Department. The National Extension Service Blocks and the Community Development Blocks are now charged with development work.

Sugarcane improvement schemes derive considerable help from the Pusa Institute of Sugarcane Research. There are two Assistant Directors of Agriculture exclusively for sugarcane improvement

schemes with headquarters at Siwan and Hathwa. They are responsible for giving necessary technical advice. The Assistant Directors work directly under the Director of Sugarcane Research, who has his headquarters at Pusa. Regarding agricultural education, mention has to be made of the Agricultural School attached with the Central Agricultural Farm at Sepaya. The School was started from 1953. Stipends are given to the students who are ordinarily matriculates. After completion of one year at the School, some of the successful students are sent for a further training at the Extension Training Centre, either at Muzaffarpur or at Patna, and on completion of this training, they are appointed as Village Level Workers in the National Extension Service Blocks. They are the field workers through whom better and more intensive agriculture has to be spread.

Under Agricultural Research there is a Botanical Sub-station at Sepaya. This Sub-station is directly controlled by the Economic Botanist at Sabour and the Regional Director of Agriculture at Pusa. This Sub-station conducts trials of different crops and similar other problems. Field work for sugarcane research is done under the Director of Sugarcane Research

There are Specialists at Sabour for Agronomy, Botany, Chemistry, etc., who study the local problems as they crop up. Mention has to be made that the soil of Saran district has particular features and sugarcane could be grown practically on any type of soil in this district. The Specialists are engaged in studying the particular types of fertilisers and their proper doses for any particular crop from *thana* to *thana*. The Central Farm at Sepaya, 11 miles from Gopalganj, has an area of 321 acres. The farm is under an Assistant Director of Agriculture with headquarters at Sepaya. The farm is used as the research centre on small scale.

As indicated before, the Department of Agriculture has to introduce better agricultural implements. There has not been much success yet in this direction as the old and indigenous type of tools and implements still continue. The working of better type of plough is shown in the agricultural farms. Improved implements are sought to be spread on a 50 per cent subsidy basis in some cases. Encouragement is also given to a few firms that manufacture better implements. The most important achievement has been in the introduction of the Bihar Plough which makes furrows to a depth of five to six inches. The price is about twenty rupees per plough. The Ridge Plough is used for ridging, furrowing and sub-soiling and could do the operation on three acres per day.

Till co-operative farming is introduced, owing to the smallness of the holdings, primarily due to the laws of inheritance, there is not much future for tractors and the modern implements meant for tractors Tractors could only be used by the more solvent type of cultivators who have got consolidated blocks for the

cultivation of sugarcane The *Bihar Statistical Hand Book*, 1953, mentions that in 1945 there were 1,11,276 wooden and 6,428 iron ploughs. It further mentions that there were 53 tractors in 1951 It is not expected that there has been any large increase in the number of the tractors. The owners of the tractors use better type of harrows, seed drills, clod crushers, hoes, etc.

Seed drills (*taurha*) are implements made mostly of *babul* wood for the sowing of seeds in lines in a field at uniform depth. The indigenous implements for sowing are mostly used in the district. But at some places improved implements, such as bullock and hand driven seed drills, are used for sowing barley and wheat.

For weeding, *khurpi* and *kudal* (spade) are used and for harvesting sickle is the only implement available.

The water lifts used on wells in this district for the purpose of irrigating the fields are mostly leather bucket (*mot*) and *latha*. The third method of the water lifts is done by a hollowed-out trunk of a tree called *karinga*. By another contrivance the water is raised by a reed basket scoop, which two men work by ropes attached to each end. All these indigenous implements of the water lifts are manufactured locally. The Agriculture Department has been able to introduce a few pumps for lifting water, worked either by oil engine or electric pumps. The waste of man power in the use of these primitive implements is considerable. In 1945, a census was made of only 24 oil engines and 8 electric pumps. The figure has gone up now, particularly of electric pumps.

Sugarcane is now crushed in the iron roller mills worked by bullocks, but formerly the mills used were primitive wooden or stone machines, called *kolhu*. The juice extracted is poured into shallow iron pans and boiled. The only fuels used are the cane leaves and the dried stalks from which the juice has been extracted. When the juice thickens, it is poured into small pots and exposed to the air to harden, the molasses thus prepared being known as *gur*. According to the implement census taken in 1945, there were 2,728 sugarcane crusher machines worked by bullocks and 48 were power machines popularised by the Agriculture Department. The figures have gone up but no further census has been taken.

SEED-SUPPLY.

The bulk of the seeds used by the villagers comes from their own field As the manure normally used by our agriculturists is not very pronounced, the seeds usually deteriorate in quality from year to year. That is why seed multiplication scheme has been taken up for multiplying better type of seeds to introduce them to the farmers and take from them a quantity of the seeds when the crops grown from the better type of seeds are reaped. The Government farms at Sepaya and Siwan have not yet been able to supply better type

of seeds to any appreciable extent. A number of Seed Multiplication Government Farms have been opened up for propagation of better type of seeds.

MANURES.

The common manures are cowdung, the droppings of the sheep and goats and farm refuse. The Credit Agricole Depot supplies improved types of manure, such as oil-cakes, chemical manures and bone-meals.

The cultivators are getting more compost-minded and prepare their own compost. The outskirts of the urban area are now being used by municipal bodies to prepare town compost out of town sweeping and night-soil. The apathy of the cultivators to use this type of manure is now being liquidated. Regarding the use of the different types of improved manures, it may be mentioned that about four to five maunds of oil-cakes are used per acre for food crops and 8 to 10 maunds for sugarcane. About one maund of ammonium sulphate is used per acre for food crops while two maunds are needed for sugarcane for the same area. There is some apathy to use bone-meal manure. One maund of it is put in one acre for food crops and two maunds for sugarcane. Ammophos and Ammonium Nitrate are also being used whenever available.

CROP ROTATION.

The cropping system of the district varies from soil to soil. In low land, paddy is grown annually followed by upland *kharif* crops, which are followed by *rabi* crops, if maize and *rahar* are grown. In the light sandy loam, where sugarcane is raised, the green manuring crop is followed by sugarcane in the first year, in the second year only sugarcane remains in the field and in the third year light crops like barley, peas, *urid* and millets are grown.

AGRICULTURAL DISEASES AND PESTS.

Diseases of the Cereals.

Wilt of maize.—A type of disease of maize. In this case the symptom is shown firstly by the drying up of the leaves of the plant. When the stem is cut longitudinally there is fungus growth at the nodes and the pith. Cultural and manurial experiments are going on in the district by the Plant Pathology Department of Bihar in the village Olanpur of Masrakh police-station to check this disease.

Pipburn (Dakhinaha).—This disease is caused due to nutritional deficiency of the soil. In this disease the tip of the plant becomes yellow and ultimately dries up. One maund of Ammonium Sulphate per acre can control the disease.

Leaf spot of paddy.—This is a parasitic disease caused by the fungus. Brownish spots on leaves and stems are found. Proper and timely seed treatment can prevent the infestation.

Diseases of Sugarcane.

Red-rot.—The leaves of the affected plants droop and dry up along with the margin. Badly affected canes shrink and black specks appear on the rind and they are conspicuous near the nodes. On splitting a cane, broad red blotches with transversely elongated white centres are noticed. This disease of sugarcane appeared in the year 1957 and about 13-14 per cent of the sugarcane area were affected. It created a havoc at Pachrukhi, New Siwan and Mairwa sugarcane growing areas. The only preventive measure is the sowing of disease-free seeth and in cases where it appears, the entire clump may be eradicated.

Pests.

Stem borer, white ant, case worm, gandhi bug, paddy grass hopper, etc., are some of the common pests. Locusts and rats also cause a lot of harm to the standing crops.

Constant research is going on to find out diseases and pests resistant variety of seeds by the specialists and such seeds are put to circulation. Every kind of insecticides and chemicals have now been found and are used by the agriculturists for the storage of seeds.

FISHERIES.

In spite of a considerable length of the rivers Ganga, Gogra and Gandak lying within this district and a fair number of tanks and other water reservoirs, this district is not important for the yield of fish. Netting of fish is the work of fishermen or the *Mallahs*. For various reasons, a considerable percentage of the Mallahs have taken to other occupations. There are no regular fishing villages in this district. On the average, probably every village has some fishermen families. In the larger villages, fishermen live in a distinct *tola* of the village but it cannot be said that there is no village where the bulk of the population consists of fishermen. There are various sub-sections among the fishermen, such as *Banpar, Gorhri, Kewt, Mallah, Mariari, Surahuja, Tamar* and *Tior*. According to the *District Census Hand-Book,* 1951, the total number of persons who were found to be economically active in fishing was only 1,032 with 886 males and 146 females. This will show the unimportant position the fishermen occupy in a riverain district.

One of the reasons for the moribund condition of fishing as a trade appears to be that there is no addition to the number of tanks or other big water reservoirs. On the other hand the existing tanks are not being regularly maintained as a result of which many tanks have ceased to be proper breeding ground. Water hyacinth has choked many of the tanks and other water reservoirs. Fishing in big rivers like Ganga, Gogra and Gandak requires larger nets and a better financial background which the scattered fishermen do not

possess. The toll that the fishermen have to pay for catching fish in the rivers or other tanks is not insignificant. There is also a certain amount of apathy in the younger generation of the *Mallahs* to take to this manual profession.

Under the Second Five-Year Plan some schemes have been undertaken for the development of fishing. An Inspector of Fisheries had been appointed in 1957 under the administrative control of the District Agricultural Officer. The main activities of the section will cover piscicultural demonstration and propaganda, welfare of the fishermen and the development and exploitation of suitable water reservoirs in the district. The chief fish markets in the district are Chapra, Raghunathpur, Siwan, Guthni, Siswan, Darauli and Gopalganj. The fish that comes to these markets is not sufficient for local consumption. As there is no restriction, there is some export of fish outside the district but the quantity is negligible. The following are some of the species of fish that are commonly available :—

Rohu (*Lobeo rohita*), *katala* (*Catla catla*), *naini* (*Cirrhina mirigala*), *basari* (*Lobeo calbaseu*), *boari* (*Wallago attu*), *tengara* (*Mystus seenghla*), (*mystus sor*), (*Mystus menoda*), (*Mystus cavasius*), *moya* (*Noptopterus noptopterus*) (*Noptopterus chitala*), *garai* (*Ophiocephalus punctatus*), *sorra* (*Ophiocephalus striatus*), *bhora* (*Ophiocephalus marutius*), *pothi* (*Barbus sarana*), (*Barbus ticto*), (*Barbus stigma*), *arnari* (*Mugil corsula*), *singhi* (*Heteropneustes fossilis*), *manguri* (*Calarius mangur*), *silandha* (*Silonia silondia*), *piyas* (*Pangisus pangius*), *hilsa* (*Hilsa ilisha*), *kasaya* (*Anabastos tudiens*), and *gosta* (*Bagarius bagarius*).

LIVESTOCK.

This district along with other districts in the State depends absolutely on livestock for pursuing agriculture which is the most important occupation. A good cultivator usually keeps a pair of bullocks, a few cows and one or two buffaloes. Sheep, goats and poultry do not always fall under the livestock wealth of a good cultivator. Rather the poorer sections among them or the landless labourers keep sheep, goats and poultry. A farmer's social status and resources for agriculture are judged by the number of cattle he has. Unfortunately there is an allergy among the Hindu cultivators to destroy or dispose of decrepit or useless cattle. Cattle wealth does not depend on the population only. On the other hand multiplication of the population of poor breeds of cattle will be, as it has been, a detriment. Saran district did not have good pasturage in the past. The position has grown worse now. The alkaline soil does not offer a proper pasturage. The very close cultivation, which we have in Saran district, does not leave much space for fodder crops

to be grown. The accent has been more for the growing of food-grains. As a result the animals are mostly ill-fed and neglected. The recent attempt of the Animal Husbandry Department for the cultivation of the fodder crops in some of the Blocks of the district has not yet borne any tangible result. Since a considerable time the pasturage of Champaran has been fully used by the livestockists of Saran.

Reliable figures for livestock population prior to 1920 are not available. In the *District Gazetteer of Saran*, published in 1908, no figures have been given, although it was remarked that the cattle were generally poor in quality, the best coming from Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga and from the United Provinces. It was also observed that mostly the horses and ponies in Saran district came from Balia and elsewhere in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) but a few were bred in Saran, both for domestic use and also for sale at fairs. The attitude of the Hindu cultivators towards livestock does not appear to have much changed. In his book, *History of Bihar*, Minden Wilson (1908) describes his experience in 1852 His predecessor at the indigo concern of Kunnoul got into trouble with the surrounding zamindar through having undertaken the management of a Beef Club. About 1,000 men at once appeared and drove off all the fattened bullocks and they were driven right off to the Gorakhpore jungles and then let loose to become most likely the prey of some hungry tigers. He also mentions about the Brahminy bulls which were let loose and did a lot of damage to the crops

In the later part of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth century, the European indigo planters took a lot of interest in farming and helped in improving the breed of horses particularly.

In the old English Correspondence Volumes kept in the Record Rooms references are frequently found regarding the well-bred horses at Pusa Stud in Darbhanga district.* These horses used to be brought to the other districts of North Bihar and used for hackneys and for races. References are also found regarding the distribution of Stud bulls even in the middle of the nineteenth century. These Stud bulls were kept at the farms of the factories of the Europeans and their services were free. Saran, along with the other districts of North Bihar, has always observed a number of very important cattle fairs. The principal cattle fair is, of course, Sonepur, which is commonly described as the second largest cattle fair in the world, the first being at Nijni Novogord in the U. S. S. R. It is not possible to assess this claim now as we have not got the comparative figures of the turnover of cattle at the principal different fairs of the world. In the old *Planters Gazette* published in the last quarter of the nineteenth century vivid descriptions have been given of the great Sonepur

* There are some relevant letters in Muzaffarpur Old Records. published from Gazetteers' Revision Section, Bihar. (P. C. R. C.)

fair where horses from Arabia and Tartary were brought for sale. We read of an Arab horse being brought in one of the fairs and offered for sale for one lakh of rupees. It is not mentioned whether the horse was actually sold or not.

As cattle fairs have not declined in their importance, a list of the fairs is given below :—

Name.	Period of occasion.	Duration.	Number of animals assembled.
1	2	3	4
		Days	
1. Sonepur ..	November ..	25 ..	50,000
2. Banapur	December ..	10 ..	20,000
3. Revelganj	November ..	10 ..	10,000
4. Barapatti (Mirganj thana) ..	April ..	7 ..	10,000
5. Hathwa ..	October ..	7 ..	10,000
6. Silhouri (Marhourah thana) ..	February and April	7 ..	5,000
7. Madanpur (Basantpur thana)	July ..	7 ..	8,000
8. Demarson (Masrakh thana)	March	10 ..	5,000
9. Dhorh *Asthan* (Banapur thana)	February and April	3 ..	5,000
10. Thawe (Gopalganj thana) .	March	15 ..	10,000
11. Chhitauli (Basantpur thana) ..	March and September	10 ..	10,000
12. Manjha (Gopalganj thana) ..	October ..	10 ..	5,000
13. Tajpur (Manjhi thana) ..	March	8 ..	5,000
14. Pachua (Ekma thana) ..	May	5 ..	5,000
15 Parsagarh (Ekma thana) ..	May	5 ..	5,000
16. Khajipur (Siswan thana) ..	December ..	10 ..	10,000
17. Kusaundhi (Mirganj thana)	March	7 ..	5,000

The following table indicates the livestock population and trends of increase or decrease since 1920 :—

Years.	Cattle (bull, bullocks, cows and calves)	Buffaloes.	Sheep.	Goats.	Pigs.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1920	6.69,585	2,15,707	42,033	2,11,218	..	11,37,543
1925	6,36,206	2.22,797	39,499	3,60,009	.	12,58,511
1930	7 00,850	2,64,855	48,464	3,78,703	..	13,92,872
1940	4,90,792	1,85 398	39,193	2,42,745	15,180	9,73,308
1945	5,59,844	2,09,880	34,483	2,26,848	13,244	10,44,299
1951	6 87,493	2,01,069	31,045	3,31,313	9,419	12,60,339

The figures of 1940, showing a decrease under each of the heads, are easily explained by the heavy drain of livestock due to the exigency of the Second World War. The decline is also to be noticed for sheep, goats and pigs in 1945. The reason was the same and also because of a much larger percentage of the Hindu population now taking meat. It is unfortunate that the goat population is on a rapid increase again. Goats are the worst enemy of the crops. There has been a movement among the scheduled caste people discouraging the consumption of meat of pigs. This probably explains why the pig population is on the decrease. As pig is losing the market and the number of people keeping them is also becoming less.

Detailed classifications of cattle, according to age in 1951 census along with the lump corresponding figures for 1945, are given below :—

	1951.		1945.		
	Population.	Total.	Bulls.	Bullocks.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Breeding bulls (entire males over three years kept or used for breeding purposes only).	2,776				
2. Working bullocks and uncastrated males over three years kept for work only.	3,27,911	3,40,385	728	2,62,083	2,92,812
3. Bulls and bullocks over three years and not in use for breeding or work.	9,698				
1. Breeding cows (cows over three years kept for breeding or milk production).	1,80,062				
2. Cows over three years used for work only.	19,809	2,06,773	.	..	1,36,945
3 Cows over three years not in use for work or breeding.	6 902				

Young stock.	Male.	Female.				
1. Under one year	42,446	36.677	1,40,335	..	..	1,30,087
2. Up to three years	32,308	28,904				

	1951		1945		
	Population.	Total.	Bulls.	Bullocks.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6
He-buffaloes.					
1. Breeding bulls (entire males over three years kept or used for breeding purposes only).	4,025	9,194	..	..	8.464
2. Working bullocks and uncastrated males over three years kept for work only.	3,802				
3. Bulls and bullocks over three years not in use for breeding or work.	1,367				
She-buffaloes.					
1. Breeding cows (cows over three years kept for breeding or milk production).	1,15,849	1,25,907	..	..	1,16,508
2. Cows over three years used for work only.	6,416				
3. Cows over three years not in use for work or breeding.	3,642				
Young stock (Buffalo calves).	Male. / Female.				
1. Under one year	16,306 / 22 600	65,968	..	..	84,818
2. Under three years	9,498 / 17,564				
Sheep.					
1. Up to one year ..	3,160	31,045	..	..	34,483
2. Males over one year ..	10,979				
3. Females over one year ..	16,906				
Goats.					
1. Up to one year ..	32,553	3,31,313	..	..	2,26,848
2. Males over one year ..	1,09,737				
3. Females over one year ..	1,89,023				

	1931.			1945.		
	Population.		Total.	Bulls.	Bullocks.	Total.
1	2		3	4	5	6
*Horses and Ponies.	Male.	Female.				
1. Up to one year ..	752	678	6,729	..	..	..
2. One to three years	878	669				
3. Over three years	2,493	1,259				
Total ..	4,123	2,606				
*Donkeys ..	6,464	5,776	12,240	..	..	..
*Mules ..	225					
*Camels ..	231					

*Animals marked with an asterisk were not enumerated in the previous census.

From the above figures it will be seen that the number of non-working bullocks, cows and buffaloes is 21,609 and of the young stock 2,06,303 out of 8,88,562. This will show the basic weakness of the cattle strength. If we add to it the figures of other species of live-stock, one may be tempted to observe that Saran district is maintaining an unnecessary cattle population. This observation is also based on the poor species of cows, bullocks and buffaloes that we see in Saran district. The number of breeding cows is not necessarily an index of their wealth because they normally assure only a poor type of progeny.

It may, however, be mentioned that the Animal Husbandry Department has been trying to introduce imported varieties of *Tharparkar*, *Sahiwal*, *Shahabadi*, *Hariana* and *Bachaur* breeds which are slowly getting popular. The price of an ordinary bullock ranges between Rs. 100 to Rs. 500. The price of a cow is between Rs. 100 to Rs. 350. It may be mentioned here that out of 1951 livestock census figure of 2,06,773 cows, only 77,209 are milch cows. Milk yield of a cow of Saran district is extremely poor and will not average more than 1 pound a day. The buffalo population is not large. She-buffaloes are better tended and fed than the cows. They yield much more milk than the cows and a milch buffalo will fetch between Rs. 200 to Rs. 500. Horses, ponies, mules and donkeys, though not used for agricultural operations, are called agricultural livestock. They are mostly used for drawing transport vehicles or as pack

animals. Sheep and goats yield wool, hair and skin besides the meat. *Gareris* or shepherds keep flocks of sheep. The wool is of poor quality. The Animal Husbandry Department has been trying to improve the breed by the provision of selected bulls and opening up of artificial insemination centres. Artificial insemination centres have been opened at Chapra, Ekma, Mairwa, Siwan, Gopalganj and Hathwa. Jamunapari bucks are kept in these centres for the upgrading of the goats. The key village scheme sponsored by the Government of India is also in operation at Hathwa since 1951. The main object is to produce sturdy bulls in the villages. Selected bull-calves are encouraged to be tamed by the villagers on subsidy basis up to the age of 2½ years and after that they are purchased by the Animal Husbandry Department for breeding purposes.

DAIRY.

With a poor stock of buffaloes and cows, it cannot be expected that the district can have any dairy industry. Recently the Goala community, who are professional cowherds, have started keeping flocks of cows and buffaloes and trade in cow and buffalo milk. But the supply is extremely inadequate for the local consumption and there is no question of making cheese and butter for export. A number of *goshalas* have been started by private agencies or State efforts. At these *goshalas* cows and buffaloes are maintained but the standard of maintenance is poor. *Goshalas* differ from *gosadans* which are meant for housing decrepit and semi-useless cattle. It is doubtful if these *gosadans* are economically useful.

There are altogether 14 *goshalas* in the district situated at Chapra, Siwan, Baukati, Bishanpur, Masrakh, Harpur-karah, Dhangarha, Parsa, Marhowrah, Kodram, Rajauli, Amanaur, Bajrohia and Kursouth. All these *goshalas* are maintained by public subscriptions and donations, except the *goshalas* of Chapra and Siwan. These two *goshalas* have been taken under the *Goshalas* Development Scheme sponsored by the State Government. The main object of the scheme is to turn these *goshalas* into a dairy farm and to meet the requirement of the milk-supply. The Government have granted money, both as non-recurring and recurring grants, to the Chapra Pinjrapole *ghoshalas* from 1957.

There is no reliable record to assess the area under fodder crops but like foodgrains, the district is deficit in fodder also. As all available lands, including even cultivable wastelands, are being put to cultivation, the area of the pasturage has shrunk and cattle live on dry stalks of crops.

ANIMAL DISEASES.

The diseases from which animals generally suffer in the district are rinderpest, hæmorrhagic septicæmia, anthrax, black-quarter, foot and mouth diseases and bovine surra. The chart below indicates the

number of deaths from cattle-diseases from 1945-46 to 1950-51 as given in the report of Livestock Census, 1951:—

	1945-46.	1946-47.	1947-48.	1948-49.	1949-50.	1950-51.
Rinderpest ..	7	8	4	4	4	..
Foot and mouth diseases .	2	1	..	..	8	..
Hæmorrhagic septicæmia.	316	107	3	38	51	40
Other contagious diseases	..	..	..	..	4	..
Total ..	325	116	7	42	67	40

The incidence of diseases in 1957-58 would be appreciated from the chart below :—

Rinderpest—				
Attacks	..	..	..	89
Deaths	..	..	..	47
Hæmorrhagic Septicæmia—				
Attacks	..	..	..	86
Deaths	..	..	..	50
Black-quarter—				
Attacks	..	..	..	17
Deaths	..	..	.	7
Anthrax—				
Attacks	..	..	..	..
Deaths	..	..	..	..
Foot and mouth diseases—				
Attacks	..	..	..	608
Deaths	..	..	..	..

Veterinary Hospitals and Dispensaries

There are altogether 22 veterinary institutions in the district, out of which 3 are hospitals and 19 dispensaries. Every hospital provides treatment of animals as outdoor and indoor patients. Out of the 19 dispensaries, 10 are managed by the Government and the rest by the District Board. Two field veterinary centres are usually attached with each of the dispensary and there are altogether 43 such centres in the district. The total number of the treated animals in 1956-57 was 1,27,791.

The category of the hospitals and dispensaries are given below :—

(1) Government-managed Class I Veterinary Dispensaries—Sonepur, Kuchaikot, Manjhi, Baniapur, Darauli, Khaira, Raghunathpur, Andar, Uchakagaon and Bhorey.

(2) District Board-managed Veterinary Dispensaries—Dighwara, Bheldi, Ekma, Mairwa, Mashrak, Barauli, Baragaon, Kateya and Maharajganj.

(3) District Board-managed Hospitals—Chapra, Siwan and Gopalganj.

It is apparent from the earliest statistics that Hæmorrhagic Septicæmia causes the largest drain of cattle wealth in Saran. The largest number of deaths from Hæmorrhagic Septicæmia occurred in 1945-46, when 316 cattle succumbed to it, while the year 1947-48 marks the lowest figure of deaths from it, i.e., 3 only. Next comes, in order of severity, Rinder pest, though the actual deaths from it are far below the number of mortality from Hæmorrhagic Septicæmia. Foot and mouth diseases have negligible deaths, excepting in 1949-50, when 8 cattle died from such ailments.

In 1957-58, however, there was a greater number of casualties due to an epidemic. Hæmorrhagic Septicæmia again accounted for the largest number, i.e., 50 deaths out of 86 attacks. Rinderpest follows up with 47 deaths out of 89 attacks and Black-quarter with 7 deaths out of 17 attacks. The largest number of attacks occurred due to foot and mouth diseases, 608, but, fortunately there was no death from them.

These figures, however, should not be taken literally to indicate the incidence of livestock diseases. The total livestock population and the area of the district would show that the provision of only 22 dispensaries cannot be said to be adequate. There is not much of hospital-mindedness in the owners of the cattle. It is only when the indigenous medicines fail to bring about any improvement the diseased animal is taken to the dispensary. The visits of the itinerary veterinary doctor can only be few and far between. The reported cases in the dispensaries represent only a fraction of the actual number.

Cattle Products.

There are two slaughter-houses in the district recognised by the Government, one at Siwan and the other at Chapra. The Chapra Municipality by a resolution has banned cow-slaughter within its municipal area. The following are the figures of animals slaughtered during 1957-58 :—

	Cows.	Bulls.	Calves.	Buffaloes.	Sheep.	Goats.
Siwan ..	324	318	265	1,173	1,148	5,336
Chapra ..	..	..	..	3,228	787	23,349
Total ..	324	318	265	4,401	1,935	28,685

The quantity of milk yield of cows and buffaloes in 1951 census was 1,322.4 and 1,584.9 maunds per day, respectively.

POULTRY.

Poultry farming is an important cottage industry and a subsidiary income to the agriculturist. It is, however, not popular in rural areas. The common Hindu agriculturist does not keep poultry. A class of labourers of the landless type and the Muslim agriculturists keep poultry.

The Poultry Development Scheme is under operation since 1956-57 in the district under the Animal Husbandry Department. This Department has hitherto provided two hatching and rearing centres located at Kuchaikot and Sonepur under the Community Development and National Extension Service Blocks, respectively. Birds of improved variety have been distributed.

The census of 1945 enumerated 59,307 fowls as against 62,102 in 1951. Thus the number of fowls increased by 2,705 or by 4.5 per cent. The number of ducks in 1945 was 1,262 as against 1,786 in 1951, so the number of ducks increased by 524 or 41.5 per cent.

The detailed figures for poultry given in 1951 census are given below :—

Hens	20,686
Cocks	17,823
Chickens	23,503
Ducks	887
Drakes	606
Ducklings	293
.Total	63,798

IRRIGATION.

The following paragraphs are quoted from the last *District Gazetteer of Saran*, revised by A. P. Middleton, I.C.S. (1930) :-

"Irrigation is resorted to wherever the means are present, either from wells, tanks, streams, or *aharas*, i.e., reservoirs formed by constructing embankments across the line of drainage. Nearly 2,50,000 acres or 19 per cent of the cropped area are irrigated. 1,57,000 acres being irrigated from wells, 24,000 acres from private canals, and 53,000 acres from tanks and *aharas*. The crops which mainly benefit are those of the *rabi* or spring harvest and the greatest activity in providing and extending the means of artificial irrigation has been shown in the Siwan subdivision, chiefly at the expense of the Hathwa Raj.

"In the north-east of the district there is a system of canals, known as the Saran canals, which was introduced in order to counteract the injury caused by the Gandak embankment in depriving the land of its natural supply of moisture. The tendency of the Gandak in flood is to spill over its right bank southwards; and were it not for a massive embankment on this side, Saran would be subject to devastating floods. While, however, it protects Saran from floods, this embankment deprives it of any advantage it might have from employing the Gandak for irrigation. To meet this difficulty it was agreed, at the instance of the indigo planters, between 1877 and 1880, to make five sluices in the Gandak embankment, and to connect them with four streams rising near the embankment, and flowing through the district, viz., the Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai and Gangri, the object being to allow the water of the Gandak to pass freely down these channels, from which it might be lifted on to the fields. The estimated cost was Rs. 4,63,805; and Government agreed to advance this sum, provided that those concerned agreed to pay interest at the rate of 4½ per cent:—the actual capital cost, direct and indirect, however, has amounted to more than Rs. 7 lakhs. A guarantee for Rs. 21,750 was given, and for some years was paid, the guarantors being chiefly indigo planters, who thus obtained an insurance against the loss of their crops from drought. The works were completed in 1881 and are said to have irrigated as much as 21,000 acres in 1884-85. The contract with the indigo planters terminated in 1890 and Government demanded a higher guarantee, which the planters refused to give. After that, various plans were tried, but none gave any satisfaction. The canals were opened for a short time in the famine of 1897, but the Commissioner reported that they were of little use, and they were closed after irrigating only a little over 5,000 acres, because it was found that it was hopeless to expect any adequate return for any expenditure on them for irrigation purposes. Since January, 1898, the sluices have remained closed except when they have been opened at irregular intervals at the request of the managers of the Hathwa Raj and of certain indigo concerns, and also at the request of the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Sepaya Farm, on the condition that they should bear the cost of making and removing the requisite earthen dams. No record has been kept of the areas thus irrigated. The main channel of the Gandak left the head sluice long ago, and the supply

channel has silted up so that without considerable further expenditure water can only be taken during floods.

"In the year 1915, it was contemplated by Government to abandon the canals entirely, retaining only the land and banks required for the protective embankment. At that time the managers of the Maniara and Saddowa concerns agreed to pay Rs. 500 a year each to cover the maintenance expenses of the canals and it was, therefore, decided by Government to retain the canals as Government works. After some time the manager of the Maniara factory refused to pay his share of the contribution and then after a few years the manager of the Saddowa factory also refused to pay his share.

"In the year 1924, the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council passed a resolution recommending to Government to reopen the Saran canals by putting them in proper order and accordingly a rough estimate of cost amounting to Rs. 85,991 was prepared, but as it was considered that there was no chance of those works ever being profitable and that in view of the small area to be benefited and the heavy outlay they were hardly useful, the matter was not proceeded with further. There is still a feeling that the Saran canals should be improved for irrigation, but there is little prospect of the work being undertaken.

"At present, the canal system consists of a main feeder canal 6½ miles long, and of the branch canals formed by the Daha, Gandaki, Dhanai and Gangri, which have an aggregate length of nearly 12 miles. They are fed from a *sota* or side channel of the Gandak, and there are supply-sluices to the main canal and the branch canals, as well as a regulator at the head of the Daha; but the *sota* has not been in an active condition for a long time.

"Irrigation from wells is very common except in the tracts bordering on the Gandak river where there is a prejudice against it on the ground that the soil is unsuitable. In the greater part of the district, however, well irrigation is feasible owing to the fact that sub-soil water is found very near the surface. The contrivances for raising water are simple. One is a well with a leather bucket (*mot*) hung on a rope which passes over a pulley and is attached to two bullocks which run down an incline and pull up the bucket when filled. A second method is the erect pole (*latha*) with a bamboo balanced on it, supporting a bucket on one

end and a lump of mud on the other. According to a third method, the hollowed-out trunk of a tree is lowered into a stream and the water raised by it is guided to where it is wanted. By another contrivance the water is raised by a reed-basket scoop which two men work by ropes attached to each end. Sometimes the water has to be raised by two or even three successive stages before the cultivator can irrigate his land. In his report on the famine of 1897 the Collector, Mr. Chapman, strongly advocated the systematic construction of masonry wells, holding that this would render the district immune from famine. The number of wells recorded at the Cadastral Survey (which was completed in 1901) was 30,432, while at the Revisional Operations of 1915—1921 the number was 58,739."

This picture has been, somewhat, changed now. A drive has been made in implementing development schemes within the district and a large number of wells, tanks, tube-wells, propelled by electricity and diesel and other irrigation schemes, major and medium have been undertaken in the recent years for giving a larger and better system of irrigation. It is calculated that in 1952-53, 25 per cent of the cropped area, covering 3,08,000 acres, was irrigated against 19 per cent mentioned in the last *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) and 15 per cent in the earlier District Gazetteer (1908). Mr. Middleton does not mention the particular year when 19 per cent of the cropped area was irrigated but it may be guessed that the figure refers to one or two years prior to 1930. There have been no settlement operations recently and we have not got very reliable figures regarding the present area of irrigated lands.

The statistics published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Bihar, show the areas for the years 1952-53 and 1955-56 as follows :—

Sources of irrigation.	(Area irrigated in thousand acres.) Years. 1952-53.	1955-56.
Wells	2,14	93
Tanks	55	33
Government canals	3	7
Private canals	3	1
Other sources*	33	25
Total area irrigated ..	3,08	1,58

* The other sources include tube-wells also, from which 2,757.17 acres were irrigated in 1955-56.

It is difficult to accept the figures for 1955-56 as correct. It is within common knowledge that there has been a tremendous increase in the number of wells and it is easy to sink ordinary wells in this district. There cannot possibly be any diminution of the area irrigated by wells. The reasons for the fall in the area irrigated through tanks or other sources are also not available. The information regarding the area irrigated by Government canals collected from the Executive Engineer's office is different. It is not known what are the agencies for collecting the figures. The overall picture, on questioning people, who have got their own farms and have a good knowledge of the district, gathered is that there has been an increase in the area irrigated through various sources. Our conclusion is that more than 25 per cent of the cropped area in Saran has irrigation facilities.

WELLS.

Regarding wells as a source of irrigation, it has to be observed that since the Last Revisional Settlement Operations of 1915—1921 there has been no other census of wells. It is easy to sink wells, the water surface being quite close and the number has gone up but it is hazardous to make a guess of the percentage of increase. The problem of irrigation cannot be solved by wells only. *Kutcha* wells are liable to sink. Masonry wells would have been much better. Mr. Chapman, however, was optimistic that masonry wells could have rendered the district immune from famine.

TANKS.

The number of tanks is not known. During the hey-days of the landed aristocracy it was common to construct a tank. With the rise in the wages of labour, economic changes and a gradual decline of the landed aristocracy, very few tanks have been constructed within the last two or three decades. On the other hand, the existing tanks have been allowed to decay. It is only in times of scarcity, when hard labour schemes are introduced for giving relief to the needy, that some of the tanks have been resuscitated in the recent years.

AHARAS.

The *aharas*, the natural water reservoirs, have also not been censused But more care has been taken of the *aharas*, as the irrigation done from the *aharas* is quite important for the country-side. Water during the rainy season is allowed to collect in the *aharas* and taken to the villages according to the recorded existing village rights. In the recent years, with the introduction of the minor irrigation schemes, the *aharas* have come into prominence. The tanks and the *aharas* are being extensively linked with the minor irrigation schemes.

TUBE-WELLS.

Tube-wells, propelled by electricity, are a very recent renovation. Up to 1955-56, the total number of tube-wells sunk was 97 at the

cost of Rs. 18,87,038 and the estimate was that their water would irrigate 38,800 acres with the capacity of each tube-well to irrigate 400 acres. The irrigation done from these tube-wells in different seasons is given below in acres :—

Year.			Hot weather.	*Kharif.*	*Rabi.*
1954-55	..	..	..	1,108.85	1,409.82
1955-56	..	..	1,473.62	92.10	1,191.45
1956-57	..	..	757.16	1,367.77	484.34

The reasons for the small output of the area irrigated by these electrically propelled tube-wells are various and clearly they are not popular. The people of Saran were used to canal water for irrigation and the rate for taking canal water is very much cheaper than the rate for taking water from a tube-well. The Irrigation Department, however, contends that their charges are by far much lower than what is charged in the other States. There are complaints of technical defects regarding the working of the tube-wells. It is also said that much of the water taken by a tenant at a far corner is pirated by others whose lands intervene. Recently the State Government as a temporary measure had slashed down the charges for taking water from the tube-wells to meet the drought conditions due to the failure of *hathiya* rains in 1957. Tube-well water was also in great demand for the *rabi* crops in 1958.

It may, however, be said that tube-well irrigation is a good solution for scarcity and drought due to faulty rainfall. It is costly to sink a tube-well and to make water from them available to the lands will also be costly. There can be no comparison regarding rates of water from the electric tube-wells and that from the canals.

Apart from the sinking of electrically propelled tube-wells, the sinking of open borings without strainer is done and has been quite successful in the district. This provides an assured method of availability of water in a surface percolation well.

The present position of the Saran canals is that they are not being used. Schemes for re-excavating the canals have not been pursued. During the severe drought of 1950-51 the question of reviving the Saran canals was taken up. Some of the channels were desilted at a cost of Rs. 2.8 lakhs and the canals were re-opened in July, 1951, by the Minister for Irrigation and Electricity. That year the resuscitated Saran canals irrigated about 6,500 acres. Some further work was done in 1952 which irrigated about 12,000 acres for *kharif*. The question of reviving the Saran canals has again been shifted to the background, particularly because of the possibility of the implementation of Gandak Irrigation and Power Project. At present Saran canals only carry the spill water of the rivers during

floods and some lands are irrigated by this spill water. But if the electric tube-wells have not functioned properly, either because the channels were not properly made or there were technical defects or the personnels were not good. there has been a great success in irrigating considerable quantity of lands by diesel engine tube-wells of 4 inches, 6 inches, 8 inches and 12 inches pipes. The State Government have been encouraging the use of such tube-wells on a contribution of 50 per cent of the expenditure. A 7,000 rupees worth of diesel engine tube-well would irrigate 50 acres and a 15,000 rupees worth diesel engine tube-well would irrigate 100 acres. A large number of such tube-wells have been sunk by individual cultivators taking advantage of Government's offer of 50 per cent contribution. In future any irrigation programme for Saran district will have to underline the sinking of surface wells, masonry wells, open borings and diesel engine tube-wells.

A number of major irrigation schemes have been taken up recently for providing further facilities and bringing more areas under better cultivation. These schemes are sponsored at the initiative of the State and the entire cost is footed by the State. The schemes cover the remodelling of *bandhs,* repairing of some of them, construction of new channels, protection schemes and fixing up embankments on some big *chaurs* and *tals*. In 1955-56 the following major irrigation schemes were taken up. The area to be benefited by the schemes is more or less problematic and will depend on various factors :—

No. of Schemes.	Cost.	Area to be benefited by the scheme in acres.
	Rs.	
Remodelling of Naini *Bandh* ..	3,31,057	96,000
Remodelling of 12 nos. *Bandh* ..	20,06,456	60,350
Repairing of 7 nos. of *Bandh* ..	19,45,964	1,44,000
Construction of Jan *Nala* near Sarai Bux	5,554	1,920
Chapra town protection scheme ..	1,04,440	3,500
Construction of Mahi Embankment ..	16,35,035	30,689
Hardia *Chaur*	1,20,785	27,520
Puraina *Tal*	2,21,811	1,704

A number of medium irrigation schemes were taken up under the Bihar Private Irrigation Act, 1922.

From 1950-51 to 1956-57, 27 medium irrigation schemes were completed at a cost of Rs. 5,60,032. The details are as follows :—

Year.	No. of schemes.	Area covered in acres.	Cost in rupees.
1950-51	1	2,000	6,812
1951-52	6	12,800	1,30,927
1952-53	2	5,000	68,729
1953-54	4	6,760	87,114
1954-55	3	4,700	50,340
1955-56	9	11,750	1,69,667
1956-57	2	2,833	46,443
Total ..	27	45,843	5,60,032

A very large number of minor irrigation schemes were taken up from 1951-52 to 1956-57. The expenses of these schemes under the Bihar Private Irrigation Act, 1922, have to be shared between the persons to be benefited and the State. The cultivator's share could also be given in labour.

The details of the minor irrigation schemes are as below :—

Year.	No. of scheme.	Area covered in acres.	Cost in rupees.
1951-52	465	6,445	7,50,000
1952-53	140	2,863	5,75,000
1953-54	377	2,504	4,50,000
1954-55	403	16,458	3,50,000
1955 56	253	8,588.67	2,30,000
1956-57	193	3,903.27	83,561

EMBANKMENTS.

The rivers of Saran district are liable to heavy floods and to safeguard the countryside from inundation, *bunds* and embankments have been constructed long since. From early years of British administration an emphasis has been laid on the maintenance of the existing *bunds* and embankments and the construction of new ones. For some reason or other, the policy of "no *bund*" has not been followed in this district as in some other districts of North Bihar.

In the early years of British administration and clearly before the advent of the British it appears that the construction and maintenance of *bunds* and embankments was the responsibility of the local zamindars. With the promulgation of various tenancy laws and changes in rent assessment the zamindars started neglecting the *bunds* and embankments and the responsibility was shifted to the Government. We read of the apathy of the zamindars to assist one Captain Sage who was especially deputed to construct a number of embankments to save the district free from inundation. A letter, dated

the 15th March 1829, from the Collector of Saran, to the Officiating Commissioner of Revenue, mentions that Captain Sage was anxious to complete the *bunds* before the rains set in. Captain Sage reported that some of the zamindars were extremely negligent and should be held responsible if there is a damage to a *bund* within his jurisdiction.

There was no dearth of labour. Captain Sage mentions that a man would earn 7 pice per day for throwing 140 cubic feet of earth. Considering the price index of that time this rate of wages was quite attractive. The able-bodied prisoners were also largely used for construction of works of public utility including *bunds* and embankments.*

Bunds and embankments in a district like Saran not only give protection against inundation but also help irrigation. The last *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) has the following :—

> "To protect the country against inundations caused by the overflow of its great boundary rivers, extensive protective works are necessary. The Gandak is embanked on both sides from where it leaves the high country in north Champaran to its junction with the Ganges at Sonepur. The length of the embankment in this district is 99 miles, extending from the village of Matihania in the north to Sonepur in the south, and there are subsidiary embankments, known as *Chharki* embankments, with a length of nearly 20 miles. The Gandak embankment is one of the oldest in the province; for it appears from the Collectorate papers that one Dhausi Ram, the *Naib* of Muhammad Kasim Khan, *Subahdar* of Bihar, spent over a lakh of rupees in making this embankment in or about the year 1756. Between that date and 1796 nothing was done to keep it in repair with the result that it gave way at several points and destructive floods occurred. In 1797 it appears to have been brought under the management of Government which spent nearly Rs. 36,000 on its repair, recovering almost the whole of this sum from the zamindars of the tract protected. Partial repairs continued to be carried out for the next 25 years, but the embankment was far from giving complete protection and destructive floods continued to inundate the country. Between 1820 and 1825 the works had fallen into such a ruinous state that the zamindars petitioned Government to repair them thoroughly or to allow them to do so; eventually it was decided to re-construct the embankment under professional supervision and this was done in 1830.

* "Sarkar Saran" published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Bihar. (P. C. R. C.)

"Since that date periodical repairs have been carried out when required, the sums expended being recovered from the zamindars throughout the district in proportion to the amount of Government revenue payable by them. The embankment is now maintained under a contract for 20 years from the 1st April 1920, under which the zamindars pay an embankment cess assessed at Rs. 27,800 a year. The management of it rests with the Public Works Department in which is vested the right of pasturage and of trees growing on it. It is 12 to 13 feet high and the top is sufficiently wide for the passage of motor cars.

"Though doubts have been raised whether the embankment has been constructed in the most advantageous position throughout, it has on the whole served its purpose well It was badly breached in 1872 when the damage done by inundation was estimated at two lakhs of rupees and the crops of about 30 villages were completely destroyed. There have been other breaches since then but none so serious. As far as the Gandak is concerned the district has had partial protection since as far back as 1756 and complete protection (save in wholly exceptional circumstances) since 1830. The complete shutting out of the Gandak water has its disadvantages. Formerly the various streams and water-courses which intersect the district received each year a large volume of pure fresh water which ultimately flowed out into the Ganges. This no longer happens and the little water left in these streams in the cold and hot weather is stagnant and malarious. In years of drought irrigation is no longer feasible from these sources and the banks of some of the streams have become so unhealthy that no one will live near them. It was to remedy this state of affairs that the Saran canals were constructed."

The contract referred to in the above quotation expired in 1940. A fresh contract was made in 1940 for the maintenance of the Gandak embankments for 20 years and the zamindars had to pay the assessed embankment cess. After the abolition of zamindari the responsibility of the maintenance of embankments has vested in the Government. In 1955-56 Rs. 1,22,716 was sanctioned to improve the embankments. The improvement protected an area of 5,900 acres against flood.

The Gandak embankment policy is now linked up with a big project for harnessing Gandak river for more food and power. The project can only be implemented according to its original plan if Nepal Government agrees. It is understood that even if Nepal Government does not agree the project will be taken up but the

head-works, etc., will all be confined within the limits of Champaran district. The matter has been taken up under the joint consultation of Nepal, State Government of Bihar, State Government of Uttar Pradesh and the Centre.

If and when the project is completed the problem of the agricultural economy of the district of Saran along with some of the districts of North Bihar will be partially solved. The project is meant for the districts of Saran, Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga of Bihar, Gorakhpur and Deoria of Uttar Pradesh and Nepal. Some of the salient features may be mentioned here.

The mountain basin of Gandak is known as Sapt Gandaki, named after seven tributaries of Gandak traversing the region. Further down, the river collects the discharge of a number of hilly streams before it debouches in the plains through a deep gorge at Tribeni, situated in Nepal at the border of Champaran district of Bihar. Adjoining lower down is Bhaisalotan from where the existing Tribeni canal takes off. From here it flows in a south-easterly direction, forming the natural boundary between the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh for a length of 28 miles. It flows by the side of this border in Bihar for another 44 miles from where it separates the districts of Champaran and Saran and winds its way in south-easterly direction to meet Ganga at Hajipur opposite Patna.

The region through which Gandak flows, including Saran district, has a high incidence of density of population and the economy is purely agricultural. Perennial irrigation is very much needed and that is why the Gandak project was taken up in 1948 and the scheme has been revised in 1957 to the tune of Rs. 47.64 crores

The scheme consists of barrage construction and head-works across the Gandak at Bhaisalotan, about 1,000 feet below the take off of existing Tribeni canal, to divert the river water for irrigation and power, construction of western canal system for providing annual irrigation in Nepal, Gorakhpur and Deoria districts of Uttar Pradesh and Saran district of Bihar, construction of eastern canal system for providing annual irrigation in the districts of Champaran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga and construction of four hydro-electric power houses, two on the main western and two on the eastern canals for generation of power

Gogra embankments.

The last *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) has the following paragraph regarding Gogra embankments :--

"No embankments have ever been maintained by Government along the Gogra and Ganges; but private embankments have existed along portions of the Gogra since a period long before the acquisition of Bihar by

the British Government. From the junction of the little Gandak with the Gogra, as far as the point where the Daha river runs into the latter, the bank is for the most part high and very little in the way of embankments is needed; south of this point a zamindari embankment runs down to a point above Godna. The Daha is also artificially embanked on both sides for some distance above its junction with the Gogra. Between Revelganj and Sonepur there is very little in the way of embankments. At the beginning of last century, however, it would appear that the parganas of Kasmar and Chirand were partially protected by embankments which were entirely carried away by extensive floods in 1838; since that date nothing has been done to restore them. The want of proper embankments along the Gogra river has been severely felt on more than one occasion even during the last thirty years. As already stated, the breaking of a zamindari embankment near Manjhi in 1890 resulted in a disastrous flood and proposals were made that Government should take over and improve the embankments along the Gogra; but the project was eventually vetoed and these works are still left to the care of the zamindars and villagers."

Recently embankments, known as 7 nos. Gogra embankments, have been constructed on the left bank of the river Gogra from village Dumri, near Tajpur, at a cost of Rs. 19,45,964 and will protect an area of 1,44,000 acres from the ravages of floods.

Apart from the Gandak and Gogra embankments, there are a number of other embankments and *bunds*, big and small, many of which require a repairing. Some of them probably are more the source of trouble than benefit. Under major irrigation scheme some of the *bunds* and embankments have recently been taken up. Some of the schemes have been covered.

The treatment of flood, which follows, is closely associated with the question of embankments.

FLOODS.

In 1787 several *parganas* were entirely under water, the whole of the *bhadai* and a great part of the *aghani* crops were destroyed. In 1871 Chapra was inundated by a combined flood of the Ganga and Gogra; they were in spate again in 1874 but the town was saved by an embankment strengthened that year. In 1890 the Gogra breached the zamindari embankment from Manjhi to Tajpur *ghat* and the western bank of the Daha. Much damage was done chiefly in the Manjhi, Darauli and Chapra thanas.

In 1898 serious flood occurred owing to the abnormally heavy rain. The tributary streams, especially the Daha, flooded the land as far as Mirganj. About one-fourth of 440.000 acres of paddy and 567.000 acres of *bhadai* was damaged.

Flood of 1906.

The flood of 1906 occurred in August, 1906, chiefly in the area between the Gandak river along with its spill channels, the Daha and the Gogra river The Gopalganj subdivision was badly affected and its effect was felt up to Chapra-Darauli Road. Test relief works were opened but failed to attract labourers. A sum of Rs. 53,400 was granted as agriculture loan and Rs. 2,300 for gratuitous relief. Hathwa Raj distributed Rs. 10,400 as gratuitous relief.

Flood of 1915.

In 1915 the rivers Gandak and Gogra were in spate and the *bhadai* crops of the Gopalganj subdivision were damaged. No loss of life was reported and the situation was met by the timely distribution of *taccavi* loans.

Flood of 1921.

There was an unprecedented flood in September, 1921, affecting the Sadar and Siwan subdivisions, owing to heavy rainfall. The rain-water rose in the Chapra town and began to pass slowly through Khanwa *nala* to the Gogra, the water level of which was then below to the level of the town. The Khanwa sluice gate could not pass the water off quickly and the flood continued to rise till the night of 16th September, after which it began to subside slowly but it took more than a week for the town to be free. The town of Chapra suffered severely and there was also extensive damage to crops in Baniapur, Ekma, Manjhi, Revelganj, Chapra Mufassil and Garkha police-stations. There were nine deaths due to collapse of houses and six due to drowning. No less than 1,039 houses in the town and 1,703 in Chapra Mufassil were completely destroyed and over 500 damaged. The danger of cholera was averted by disinfection of over 2,000 wells. Gratuitous relief and *taccavi* loans were distributed among the landless and cultivators, respectively. The amount of loans given was Rs. 1,57,879 which was distributed among 5,509 persons in 313 villages. Loans were also granted for the rebuilding of the houses and blankets were distributed either free or at cheap rate. The District Board's roads were breached at twelve places, of which nine were within five miles of Chapra. The town of Siwan was also flooded and the water did not subside till the 20th September. There was some damage to crops in Siwan, Darauli and Mairwa police-stations and in the southern part of Siwan.

Flood of 1923.

In 1923 there was a serious flood from Reveiganj to Sonepur due to the sudden rise of the rivers Sone and Ganga. The flood

lasted for five days, beginning on the 19th of August. The total area affected was about 200 square miles, covering the whole of Dighwara, Sonepur, Garkha and Parsa police-stations and parts of Chapra town, Chapra Mufassil and Revelganj. Over 20,000 houses were either wholly or partly destroyed but the loss of life was only six. The railway line was breached at several places and communication was at a standstill. The *bhadai* crops were almost destroyed. The amount spent on gratuitous relief was Rs. 23,836, while a sum of Rs. 2,70,936 was given out in *taccavi* loans. The flood deposited valuable silt on the flooded lands which, to some extent, compensated the agriculturists for the losses they had suffered.

Flood of 1925.

There was flood in the Gopalganj subdivision in 1925. A sum of Rs. 2,261 was advanced under the Agriculture Loans Act and Rs. 1,250 under the Land Improvement Act.

Flood of 1935.

After the earthquake of 1934 the floods have become more severe and frequent due to the abrupt change in the river's course. During the flood of 1935 the subdivisions of Gopalganj and Siwan were badly affected. A grant of Rs. 50,000 was made from the central revenues for the economic development of rural areas.

Flood of 1936.

One year later there was another flood in the Sadar and Siwan subdivisions. *Bhadai* and *aghani* crops were completely destroyed. Over Rs. 10,000 were spent on relief works. Gratuitous relief was made for the rebuilding of houses. In 1937 this tract was again affected by flood. Both *taccavi* loans and gratuitous relief were granted to flood-affected areas.

Flood of 1938.

In 1938 the *diara* tracts of the Gopalganj, Sadar and Siwan subdivisions were subject to successive floods and *bhadai* crops suffered a lot. Relief measures were adopted as usual.

Floods of 1948 and 1949.

The *bhadai* crops of the Sadar and Siwan subdivisions were damaged due to the successive floods in 1948 and 1949.

Flood of 1951.

Several thanas of the district were subject to floods owing to heavy rainfall in 1951. To relieve the sufferings of the people the realisation of Government loans was withheld for a few months and several test works opened.

Flood of 1953.

The district was visited by an unprecedented flood in 1953 affecting the entire subdivisions of Siwan and Gopalganj and the

seven thanas of the Sadar subdivisions, viz., Chapra Mufassil, Ekma, Manjhi, Baniapur, Marhowrah, Masrakh and Parsa. There was an excessive rain and want of outlet to discharge the excessive rain water caused the rivers Gandak, Daha, Bhota, Jhor, Son, Tel and Gandaki to rise in spate and submerged the entire low lands of their beds. The flood destroyed the standing crops of the district, that is, about 2½ lakh acres of *aghani* paddy, 2 lakh acres of maize and 1 lakh acres of *bhadai* crops were damaged. The agriculturists and the landless labourers were badly hit. About 2,58,533 persons or three-fourth of the total population of the district were affected by this flood. Relief measures were adopted by the Government to meet the adversity and thereby to relieve the sufferings of the people. Gratuitous relief in shape of 7,361 maunds of grains were distributed among the needy. For giving employment to the landless labourers, 420 hard manual schemes were started and Rs. 5,43,078 were spent over them. Agriculturist loans, amounting to Rs. 70,87,562, were advanced to the agriculturists and 805 fair price shops were opened to supply the foodgrains at reasonable price to arrest the rising price of the essential commodities.

There was an investigation into the floods of the rivers in 1953 by the Irrigation Department.* From their report the following data are given :—

The River Gogra.

General description of flood and the river.—The river Gogra takes its rise in the foot hills of the Himalayas and running through the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh, flows along the southern boundary of Saran district and falls into the river Ganga near Dighwara. The following tributaries fall into the river :—

(1) The *Choti* Gandak, coming from Uttar Pradesh fall in this river at Guthni.
(2) The Jharhi falling at Trikalpur,
(3) The Daha falling at village Tajpur Fulwaria,
(4) The Sondhi falling at village Inai, and
(5) The Tel falling at village Brahmpur.

The usual flooding of the southern portion of Saran district is caused by the Gogra, spilling over its left bank practically from Guthni to Manjhi, which spreads in a length of about 10 miles and after crossing Siwan-Chapra railway line and road, passes to the north of Chapra town and again crossing the Chapra-Masrakh road, railway line and all the roads of Hardia *chaur*, finally falls into the river Ganga.

* This North Bihar Flood Report, 1953, was submitted by the Irrigation Department of the State Government. As the report summarises a lot of facts regarding the rivers in North Bihar, use has been fully made of the report for the problems of the rivers of the Saran district. Some of the suggestions made in the report have also been recorded as it was considered inappropriate to leave them out. (P. C. R. C.).

All these tributaries of the Gogra serve as the drainage channels for the country and usually bring the country drainage in the Gogra river, which do not get flooded by that time during normal rains. Thus these tributaries, flow usually from the north to south discharging the surplus water into the Gogra and saving the country from inundation and damages to crops. But when the Gogra is itself in high flood, it cannot take any discharge from these tributaries, rather the flow in that case is reversed from south to north, causing a back flow in these tributaries, which, in turn, causes inundation of the country lying on the banks of these tributaries. Further, these tributaries have been very badly silted up and having restricted sections at many places due to the growth of weeds and water hyacinth do not function well in carrying the Gogra over-spill.

This year, due to abnormal and unprecedented rainfall in the catchment of the rivers and *nallahs*, they were flooded simultaneously with the Gogra. Hence, the country could not be drained out rapidly and was rushed towards east, parallel to the railway embankment and crossing the railway bridge near Daudpur railway station, dashed against Naini *bandh*. Further, there was a sluice gate in a private *bandh* in Masrakh police-station and just west of Masrakh which collapsed in this flood and all the accumulated water rushed towards south and inundated the areas just north of Chapra town.

The junction of the rivers of Gogra and Ganga is gradually shifting from west to east. From old records it appears that the junction was nearly 3 miles west of Chapra town in the year 1949, and in the year 1895 the junction shifted to 14 miles east of Chapra town. At present the junction is nearly 18 miles east of Chapra. It is due to difference in bed slopes of the river Gogra and the Ganga, the former being steeper.

Bank erosion.—Another point of importance is that the river Gogra is eroding its left bank near Jan Tola very rapidly and it is endangering Chapra town. This year the whole Jan Tola has been washed away into the bed of the river. The municipal road, running from Gudri Rai Chauk to Brahampur, is about 150 feet only away from the course of the river Gogra at most of the places.

Cause of flood.—This year the main cause of flood was abnormal rainfall in the countryside. During the months of June and August, there has been a total rainfall of 48.52 inches at Chapra and 51.42 inches at Siwan, whereas the average rainfall of this district for the whole year was 40 inches only during the last few years. Even during the year 1948 (the greatest flood period of the district), there was a total rainfall of 46.82 inches only.

Another tragedy was that there was a heavy shower of 10.50 inches on 21st August, 1953, 3.28 inches on 22nd August, 1953 and 2.4 inches on 23rd August, 1953 at Siwan, making a total of 16.18 inches in

72 hours. Thus the entire Siwan subdivision was submerged and the water entered even the court compound and cinema houses in Siwan town.

H. F. L. 1953 compared with previous records.—The high flood level on 26th August, 1953 at Inchape bridge at Manjhi (Manjhi railway bridge) was river level 182.75. Following are the high flood levels of different years at this site :—

1936	186.50
1937	183.50
1938	185.50
1939	182.25
1940	181.17
1948	186.75
1953	182.75

Discharge observations—The high flood level discharge this year at Inchape bridge was 2,50,000 cusecs approximately and the average velocity of the river was found to be 4 feet per second. Other discharge were 1,200 cusecs approximately through the river Jharhi at Trikalpur, 6,600 cusecs approximately through the river Daha at Tajpur, 1,500 cusecs through the river Sondhi at Inai, and 1,500 cusecs through the river Tel at Brahampur.

Important communications and places affected.—The Chapra-Siwan road was completely impassable as it had been overtopped at a number of places; nearly 1 foot to 1 foot 6 inches depth of water was passing from north to south at overtopped places. This road was allowed to be cut for early drainage of accumulated rain water. The present waterways allowed in this road have proved inadequate and needs to be increased at some places to effect the desired drainage of flood water.

Two culverts, in between Daudpur and Kopa-Samhota railway stations, on the Public Works Department road also collapsed in this flood.

Most of the District Board and Local Board roads in Siwan subdivision were under water in the third and fourth weeks of August, 1953.

In Chapra Sadar and Gopalganj subdivisions also, the District Board and Local Board roads were under water and were impassable.

The Public Works Department road between Chapra and Sonepur was also overtopped and knee-deep water in a length of about 300 feet in village Barua, just west of Sitalpur bridge over river Mahi, was flowing.

Among the important places, Siwan town with its adjoining areas was hard hit and remained under water for a long time.

The River Ganga.

General description of flood and the river.—The Ganga flows along the southern boundary of Saran district from Kotwa Patti Rampur, where it is joined by the Gogra, down to Sonepur, where it is joined by the river Gandak.

The river crossed its danger point this year at Banaras and Arrah. It spilled over its left bank near village 'Kans *Diara*' and some damages were caused to this village along with its adjoining villages, but the flooding was only for a week and hence no appreciable damages to the standing crops were caused. East of Dighwara, from Chitupakan to Bariachak, the river spilled for an average width of about 2 miles up to the left bank of the river Mahi. The depth of inundation varied from 1 foot to 2 feet. A portion of the spill however crossed the North-Eastern Railway line through a bridge $3 \times 30'$ span, about 2½ miles east of Nayagaon railway station and caused inundation of Hardia *chaur*, but this spill remained for a very short period.

Erosion of bank.—The tendency of eroding of its left bank was noticed at the following villages :--Dumri, Sautha, Khutha, Bariachak and in greater intensity near Dighwara. This year the left bank of the river Ganga from Dighwara to Korian and at Kurthan was found eroded by nearly 1,000 feet and this has caused a great havoc in the locality. Some of the houses of village Malkachak were washed away and the main current is now passing along the northern end of the river. Most likely, that is the after effect of the shifting of the junction of the river Gogra with the river Ganga. A part of the Local Board road, running from Dighwara to Chitupakan, has been encroached by the river. Hence, some remedial measures are immediately necessary to save the villages along the existing left bank of the river Ganga from further erosion. This year some trial boring for a depth of 15 feet was taken in village Malkachak in a length of 7,000 feet. From the perusal of the soil, it has been observed that the soil below 10 feet is mixed with *kankar* and it is expected that the vehemence of erosion will relax to some extent.

The River Mahi.

General description of the river and flood.—The river takes its rise from the low lying track of village Balua Bhilkhand in Masrakh police-station and flows southwards up to the crossing of Chapra-Sonepur railway line through a bridge of $7 \times 40'$ span, just west of Sitalpur railway station. The rivulets, Dabra and Gandak, fall into the Mahi at Kakraghat and Sitalpur, respectively, and ultimately the river Mahi falls into the river Ganga at village Baghangaon and Korian, nearly three miles west of Nayagaon railway station.

The back-spill of the river Ganga, entering into the river Mahi, did not affect any important place due to embankments and the areas remained protected, except some damages that were caused by rain water.

The Gandaki Rivulet.

The river Gandaki spilled over its left bank near village Nagra and this spill water crossed Nagra-Bamapur road and caused inundation of the series of *chaurs* lying east of Naini *bandh*, right from the railway embankment (running from Chapra to Goldinganj R. S.) to Nagra-Bania road. Besides this, a part of the above spill water dashed against Naini *bandh*. The whole water, after being mixed up with the Gogra spill, overtopped the incomplete portion of Naini *bandh* at village Kotea in the 6th mile of the Naini *bandh* and water rushed towards east. After submerging the Lochana series of *chaurs*, Kechuli *chaurs* and other *chaurs*, all the water was entrapped by Sitalpur Brahme *bandh* along the right of the river Mahi. Finding no way out, the public of the localities cut the Sitalpur Brahme *bandh* at the following places :—Brahmua, Semarhia, Raghupur, Bishunpur tola, Gherhu Kothia to drain out the accumulated water to save their lives and properties. To avoid the catastrophe of the type, a number of sluices at these cuts have to be provided.

The same trouble of the Dabra was also experienced in the Gandaki, like spilling of water through gaps on the banks at Basantpur-Mirzapur and where there is no *bandh*, so similar remedial measures are also suggested at these places.

H. F. L. 1953 compared with previous records.—The H. F. L. recorded at Sitalpur railway bridge this year was 179.00. Following are the H. F. L. at the same site in different years :—

1923	174.75
1934	174.50
1940	169.00
1948	174.40
1952	170.00
1953	179.00

Embankments along the banks of the Mahi and its tributaries.

(*a*) *Along the Mahi.*—(1) Parmanandpur *bandh*, (2) Murthan *bandh*, (3) Baragaon *bandh*, (4) Sitalpur Patti *bandh*, (5) Sitalpur Brahmua *bandh*.

(*b*) *Along the river Dabra.*—(1) Itwa bandh, (2) Banwaripur *bandh*.

(*c*) *Along the river Gandaki.*—(1) Mura *bandh*, (2) Gandaki *bandh*.

All the above *bandhs* are part of 12 nos. *bandhs*.

The River Gandak.

General description.—The river Gandak runs along the north-eastern boundary of the district and is embanked throughout its length by Saran Embankment which protects the district from the flood of the river. The only flooding is in the *diara* area of the Gandak, which is unavoidable.

A General Description of Bandhs in the District.

At present there are 22 nos. of *bandhs* existing and controlled by the Irrigation Department in Saran district—

(1) 12 nos. Saran *Bandh,* consisting of a group of 12 *bandhs.*

(2) 8 nos. Saran *Bandh,* consisting of a group of 8 nos. of *bandhs.*

(3) Naini *Bandh.*

(4) Saran Embankment.

12 nos. Saran Bandh.—Originally repairs of 14 nos. *bandh* were taken up by the Irrigation Department at the request of the Revenue Department and an estimate, amounting to Rs. 2,20,927, was sanctioned in the Chief Engineer's Irrigation memo. no. 7665-I., dated the 23rd June 1948. This work was carried out under the Bengal Embankment Act, 1882, and was completed before the flood season of 1948, excepting construction of sluices and outlets.

The *bandhs* were overtopped and breached at several places during the unprecedented flood of 1948. The breaches caused by the flood were subsequently filled up and restored to original conditions.

After the experience of the flood of 1948, it was decided to raise and strengthen these *bandhs* to make them strong enough to withstand the flood of 1948 type. Hence an estimated amount of Rs. 20,06,436 was sanctioned by the Government to remodel and strengthen these *bandhs.*

Out of 14 nos. *bandhs,* 2 nos. *bandhs,* viz., Malkhachak and Malkhachak Ismila *bandhs,* had already ceased to exist, being washed away into the bed of the Ganga. Hence remodelling and strengthening estimate of 12 nos. Saran *Bandh* was sanctioned in the year 1951-52. The work of remodelling of 12 nos. Saran *bandhs* was carried out under the Bihar Public Irrigation and Drainage Works Act, 1947.

In the above remodelling estimate, the crest width of all the *bandhs* were kept 8 feet with slopes of 1 : 3 on the countryside and 1 : 2 on the river side and a free board of 3 feet above the 1948 flood level.

The major portion of the work of this estimate was completed before March, 1953. The remaining portion remained incomplete for want of revision of estimate, which was already exceeded, land acquisition and some other technical difficulties. A revised estimate for taking up remaining work as per original estimate has been submitted to Government, sanction of which is still awaited.

Itwa Bandh in P.-S. Garkha.

This *bandh* is along the right bank of Dabra having a total length of 1,740 feet. During the flood of 1948, this *bandh* was

overtopped in its entire length by average 1 foot depth. Hence it necessitated raising and strengthening.

The earthwork required to be done in this *bandh* could not be completed in full for which provision has been made in the revised estimate. There is also provision for a sluice gate of 4 feet span at chainage 10.5 in the original estimate. The construction of sluice work was taken up and the work was completed up to the plinth level, but due to a sudden early break of rainfall the work had to be stopped and is expected to be completed by the end of 1953-54 financial year.

This *bandh* was not affected by this flood, save and except formation of rain cuts on the bandh and the slopes damaged by wave action of the river and *chaur* water.

Banwaripur Bandh in P.-S. Parsa.

It is situated along the right bank of the river Darba. Its total length is 1,475 feet. This *bandh* was overtopped at places during the 1948 flood by average depth of 9 inches but no breach had occurred. Hence raising and remodelling of this *bandh* was provided in the estimate.

There is one existing masonry sluice in this *bandh* for which a lump sum amount of Rs. 3,500 was sanctioned in the original estimate for its special repair. Later on it has been found that the foundation of the above sluice has been badly undermined and the upstream and downstream floors have been badly damaged and scoured. Hence provision for construction of a new sluice at this place has been provided in the revised estimate. No work was done in this *bandh* after sanction of the original estimate. The work will be done on sanction of revised estimate.

This *bandh* was not affected by the flood save and except formation of rain cuts and slopes being severely damaged by the wave action of the river and *chaur* water.

Parmanandpur Bandh in P.-S. Sonepur.

Situated on the left bank of the river Mahi in village Parmanandpur, it has a total length of 250 feet. In the flood of 1948, it was overtopped by an average depth of 2 feet 6 inches and has also breached at one place. The raising and remodelling work of this *bandh* was completed before June, 1952.

This *bandh* was not affected by flood except formation of rain cuts on side slopes and erosion of toes by wave action.

Murthan Bandh in P.-S. Sonepur.

Situated on the left bank of the river Mahi, it is 830 feet long in the village Murthan. In the flood of 1948 it was overtopped by an average depth of 2 feet 6 inches and had breached at places. The

major portion of the earthwork provided in the original estimate was completed before June, 1952, and for taking up the remaining work, a revised estimate has been submitted but sanction is awaited. *There was a provision in the original estimate for one 2 feet diameter hume pipe outlet at chainage 2.5 but the same could not be done due to some technical difficulties.*

This *bandh* was not affected by this flood save and except the formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by river water.

Baragain Bandh in P.-S. Dighwara.

This *bandh* is situated along the right bank of the river Mahi about 4 miles long; starts in village Baruar and ends in the village Korian. During the flood of 1948, it was overtopped in its entire length by an average depth of 2 feet 6 inches and had breached at four places. Ninety per cent of the earthwork sanctioned in the original estimate was completed before June, 1952, the rest will be done after the sanction of the revised estimate.

There is one existing masonry sluice in this *bandh* at village Sobhanpur, for which there was a lump sum provision for its special repair in the original estimate. This sluice is in good condition and functions well. Two nos. of 2 feet diameter hume pipe outlets at chainage 40 and 105 are sanctioned in the original estimate, but the work could not be done due to some technical flaws.

This year the cultivators cut the Baragain *bandh* in village Baruar for drainage of adjacent *chaur* water without any authority. This cut was made in small length by the cultivators but later on by passing the *chaur* water, it developed to 90 feet length. Hence it is necessary that in place of 2 feet diameter hume pipe outlet at chainage 40 a sluice of 1 x 4′ should be provided at this place to avoid cutting in future.

This year the back-water of the Ganga eroded half portion of the *bandh* of river side in a length of about 1,000 feet in village Babhangawan. This requires to be repaired before the next monsoon. Besides these, the *bandh* was badly affected by wave action of river and *chaur* water and formation of rain cuts.

Sitalpur Patti Bandh in P.-S. Parsa.

Situated on the right bank of the river Mahi and 1,900 feet long, it starts from Chapra-Sonepur railway embankment and ends in village Barwan. In the flood of 1948 it was overtopped in its entire length by an average depth of 1 foot and had breached at several places. Hence it needs thorough repairs and remodelling. The major portion of earthwork provided in the original estimate was completed before June, 1952. The rest will be done on sanction of the revised estimate. According to the original estimate, a sluice of 3′ x 4′ has been constructed in this *bandh* before June, 1953, which has

proved very much successful in draining out the countryside water of Lochna series of *chaurs* at appropriate time. In the original estimate, there is also a provision of 2 feet diameter hume pipe outlet in the 16th chain which could not be done due to some technical difficulties.

This *bandh* was not affected by the flood of this year, save and except the formation of rain cuts and the erosion of toe by wave action of the river and *chaur* water.

Gandaki Bandh in P.-S. Dighwara.

Running along the right bank of the river Gandak and about 6 miles in length, it starts from Chapra-Sonepur railway embankment in village Sumirpatti. This *bandh* had breached at several places and overtopped by an average depth of 1 foot 6 inches during the flood of 1948. Hence it needs its raising and remodelling. Ninety per cent of the earthwork sanctioned in the original estimate was done before June, 1952. For the rest the revised estimate has been submitted to the Government.

Due to collection of rain water on the *chaur* side, this *bandh* was breached in the first week of August, 1953, as the level of the Gandaki was much lower than that of the *chaur* water. This was timely repaired by the Department after the drainage of the *chaur* water. This *bandh* has breached at four places, two in village Bhairopur and two in village Manpur, in the month of September, 1953, by the rush of rain water in the countryside. The breaches were repaired then and there. No damage to crop and villages were experienced, rather these breaches happened to be a source of relief to the adjacent villages. So it is better to provide sluice of suitable size at these places. After subsidence of flood water in the river, a cut was made by the Department at village Bhimpur to drain out the accumulated rain water. A sluice is desired at this place also.

Mura Bandh in P.-S. Garkha.

This is on the right bank of the river Gandaki and is 580 feet in length. It is situated across the Jan *Nala* falling into the river Gandaki in village Mura. This *bandh* is meant to check the back spill of the Ganga through the Gandaki and to protect the area by inundation. In the flood of 1948, it was overtopped by about 1 foot. The raising and remodelling of this *bandh* was completed before June, 1952.

To avoid cutting the filling of the *bandh* every year after flood for drainage of accumulated rain water on the countryside a provision of 3 × 4′ sluice was sanctioned in the original estimate, the construction of which was completed before July, 1953. This sluice is meant for drainage of Kechuli and Chanda *chaurs* lying in the north of Bara Gopal railway station. A great pressure of water falls on this sluice and its present water way proved inadequate to drain

out the area for *rabi* sowing in time. To relieve this excess pressure of water on this sluice, it is desirable to connect all three *chaurs*, viz., Chanda, Kechuli and Lochna series of *chaurs*, with one another by excavating the main channel and some tapping channels, then this Mura sluice together with sluice provided at Kamalpur in Gandaki *bandh* and at Sitalpur Patti in Sitalpur *bandh* will be able to drain off those three *chaurs* in time.

Another solution for the drainage of Chand and Kechuli *chaurs* is that a channel may be excavated starting from the deepest point of the *chaur* and terminating in village Khas *diara* where it will meet the Ganga. At the outfall point of the channel an anti-flood sluice will be necessary to avoid entrance of the back-spill of the river Ganga into the *chaurs*. Since this sluice at Mura is situated nearly eleven miles upstream from the outfall point of the river Gandaki into the Ganga, the water level in the river Gandaki at this point, takes much time in receding even when the Ganga water level subsides earlier. So the proposed anti-flood sluice at Khas *diara* may prove much helpful in early drainage of the *chaurs*.

This year the *bandh* was not affected by this flood, save and except the formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by the wave action of river and *chaur* water.

Salempur Bandh in P.-S. Chapra Muffasil.

This *bandh* is situated on the right bank of the river Tel and is a small *bandh* meant only to prevent outflanking of the existing masonry sluice across the river Tel. This sluice and *bandh* were repaired before the flood of 1948 by private agencies. In the original estimate only a lump sum of Rs. 3,500 was provided for taking up the special repair of the existing sluice and there was no provision of earthwork in the *bandh*. After subsidence of flood water of this year, it has been found that the floor of the sluice is badly damaged. There is also a tendency of undermining the foundation of the wing walls. The shutter of the existing sluice, meant for regulation, is of crude type. Hence it is suggested that a thorough special repair of the sluice is necessary for checking the tendency of undermining of wings and floors.

Sondhi Bandh in P.-S. Revelganj.

This *bandh* is along both the banks of the river Sondhi, the total length of the two is about 15½ miles. Both side *bandhs* commence from Inani bridge and terminate in Balbatra and Dhelari, respectively. In the flood of 1948, this *bandh* was overtopped and breached at several places. Hence it necessitated for sanction of estimate for raising and remodelling of this *bandh*. Ninety per cent of the earthwork provided in the original estimate was completed before December, 1952, and the rest will be taken up on sanction of the revised

estimate. This *bandh* is meant for protecting the areas from being inundated by the back spill of the river Gogra through the river Sondhi.

In this *bandh*, there were six sluices in villages Nawada, Jigna. Raghopur, Samastipur, Puraina and Mainpura and out of those six, the following three sluices are existing in Mainpura, Raghopur and Samastipur and the rest three collapsed, where the new sluices of 1 × 4′ at Jigna and Nawada and 3 × 4′ at Puraina, are necessary. The sluice at Jigna collapsed this year due to rush of water. The sluice at Puraina had collapsed in the flood of 1952 and was kept filled up this year for protecting the Puraina *chaur* from being inundated by the back spill of the Gogra water. Eight numbers of 2 feet diameter hume pipe outlets were sanctioned in the original estimate for taking water from the river or draining out countryside water into the river and they were fixed by the end of June, 1953. One of those pipes, fixed at village Sirisia proved unsuccessful as it was found inadequate to discharge water of its full catchment hence it is necessary to provide one masonry sluice of 1 × 4′ at this place. The other seven hume pipe outlets worked satisfactorily.

This year the *bandh* has been badly affected by the formation of rain cuts and the toes erosion by the wave of river and *chaur* water.

Kanal Bandh in P.-S. Manjhi.

Situated along the right bank of the river Daha and of about 6 miles in length, the *bandh* commences from Chapra-Darauli road in village Runpatti. This was breached and overtopped during the flood of 1946. Ninety per cent of the earthwork as per sanctioned estimate for remodelling this *bandh* was completed in the year 1952 and for the rest a revised estimate has been submitted.

This *bandh* has not been breached anywhere in this flood, but it was cut by the cultivators at village Khajohatti in police-station Manjhi and at village Baghawna in police-station Siswan to drain out the local rain water. The old sluice at village Khajohatti, known as Rajendra sluice, was found in delapidated condition and the sluice was filled up with earth. Now reconstruction of this sluice is essential to drain out the country water. The lump sum provision of Rs. 500 sanctioned in the original estimate will not suffice. This *bandh* has been severely affected by rain cuts and its toes have been eroded by the wave dash of river and *chaur* water.

Kurimal Bandh in P.-S. Manjhi.

This *bandh* runs parallel to Kanal *bandh*, on the left bank of the river Daha. It commences from the Chapra-Darauli road in village Tajpur and ends in village Mohammadpur after running for about 5¼ miles. This was also breached and overtopped during the flood of 1948, necessitating raising and strengthening of the *bandh*.

There was a breach at Mobarakpur this year, but timely repair prevented any damage to life and property. At other places, the *bandh* was quite safe. The cultivators of village Teghra had cut the *bandh* at two places for draining of local rain water, hence the provision of hume pipe outlets at these places are essential. This *bandh* also was badly affected by formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by dash of waves from riverside and *chaur* side.

8 nos. Saran Bandhs.

The eight number Saran *Bandh* comprises of a group of eight *bandhs* situated at different parts of the district. Out of these eight *bandhs,* seven *bandhs* lie on the west of Chapra town, running parallel to Darauli road along the river Gogra and the remaining one *bandh,* namely, Sitalpur Brahme *bandh,* lies on the east of Chapra town and runs along both the banks of the river Mahi. The functions of the former seven *bandhs* are to protect from being inundated by the Gogra water, a vast belt of 10 miles width of country parallel to Chapra-Darauli road, and of the latter is to protect the area lying on both sides of the river Mahi by the back spill of the river Ganga through the river Mahi. After 1950, 8 nos. of *bandhs* being maintained by the Irrigation Department. Before 1950, these were maintained by the private agencies. A separate estimated amount Rs. 25,04,872 for remodelling and strengthening the 8 nos. Saran *Bandh,* under B. P. I. D. A. Works Act, 1947, has already been submitted in the year 1951, to the Government and the sanction is still awaited.

Dumri Dumaigarh Bandh in P.-S. Manjhi.

The bandh is along the river Gogra and starts from a point in Chapra-Darauli District Board road and terminates in village Dumaigarh, having a total length of about 5 miles. This *bandh* was not affected by this flood, but the cultivators of village Gorain in police-station Manjhi had cut the *bandh* to drain out the accumulated rain water in the *chaur.* The whole *bandh* has been badly affected due to formation of rain cuts and toes eroded by wave dashing on riverside.

Tajpur Phulwaria Bandh in P.-S. Manjhi.

This *bandh* is along the river Gogra and starts from Dumai Garh Phulwaria and terminates in village Tajpur. This *bandh* is 1¼ miles long. This *bandh* was neither breached nor overtopped anywhere in this flood. The whole *bandh* has been badly destroyed by formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by the wave action from riverside.

Tajpur Matiar-Gayaspur Bandh in P.-Ss. Siswan and Manjhi.

This *bandh* is along the Gogra and is nearly 6 miles in length, starting from a point in Nanal *bandh,* which belongs to the family

of 12 nos. *bandhs,* and ending in Gayaspur Siswan *bandh*. Nothing unusual was experienced in this flood in this *bandh,* save and except the formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by wave action of the river.

Gayaspur Siswan Bandh in P.-S. Siswan.

It starts from the terminus of Tajpur Mahiar-Gayaspur *bandh* and terminates in the highland of village Gabhirar. This *bandh* is along the river Gogra and is 8 miles long. This has been very badly affected by waves of the river Gogra and half of the width of the *bandh* near Siswan has been eroded and washed away. This resulted in the breach of Siswan near thana building and inundated an area of nearly 200 acres but no serious destruction to life and crops was experienced. In between Gayaspur and Siswan, the *bandh* was constructed for about 2 miles by the District Board authorities, just at the outbreak of the monsoon, and this caused the Gogra to be spilled over its left bank by an average depth of 2 feet to 3 feet and inundated a vast tract of land, measuring about 2,000 acres. This *bandh* has also been badly affected by formation of rain cuts and the toes at places were also eroded by the river current.

Adampur Bandh in P.-S. Raghunathpur.

This *bandh* is along the Gogra and is nearly 3 miles in length. This *bandh* starts from the west of a temple, situated at the end of highland of village Adampur, and terminates in Rakuli Amarpur *bandh*. This *bandh* has not suffered any serious damage in this flood except the formation of rain cuts and toes eroded by wave action.

Amarpur Rakuli Bandh in P.-S. Darauli.

This *bandh* is along the Gogra and is nearly 15 miles long. It starts from the terminus point of Adampur *bandh* and terminates in Guthni *bandh*. Three-fourth width of the *bandh* has gone in the lap of the river Gogra, causing ultimately a breach at Tirkulpur, which caused damage to adjoining standing crops by inundation due to back spill of the Gogra. As there is no *bandh* from village Tier to the junction of Chapra-Darauli road and Siswan-Darauli road, so heavy inundation of adjoining fields was caused. Further, there was no *bandh* across the Ghorhi *nala* near Darauli. So the back spill of the Gogra rushed to the low-lying areas of the locality through this *nala* which caused heavy inundation in the area of nearly two thousand acres. An anti-flood sluice on this *nala* is essential to control the flood water. This *bandh* has also been badly affected by formation of rain cuts and erosion of toes by the wave action of the river water.

Guthni Bandh in P.-S. Guthni.

This is along the river Gogra, having a total length of nearly 9 miles and starts from the terminous of Rakuli-Amarpur *bandh*

and continues up to the boundary of Uttar Pradesh, where it terminates in the private *bandh*, constructed by the people of U. P. This *bandh* breached in this flood at village Sonahulla, Goharua and Dharampur. The ring *bandh* near Dumarhar sluice also breached this year. These breaches caused heavy inundation in a mile width along the *bandh*. It is desirable to provide a sluice gate at this place. The existing sluice at village Dumarhar is in collapsing state and requires reconstruction. This *bandh* has also been badly affected by the formation of rain cuts and toe erosion by the wave action of river water.

Sitapur Brahma Bandh in P.-S. Parsa.

This *bandh* is on both banks of the river Mahi, having a total length of nearly 16 miles. The left bank starts from the high railway embankment on south of abandoned Sitalpur Sugar Factory and ends in highland of Derani *math*, while the right one starts from the highland of village Kothia at the junction of the river Gandaki and Mahi and ends in the highland of village Raghupur Malahi. This *bandh* was neither breached nor overtopped this year but the *bandh* on the right bank was cut at eight places in the following villages to drain out water coming from the western side of the *bandh* :—Gurhi, Kothia, Semarahia, Brahmua, Raghupur and Bhusitola. Construction of sluices at these places is essential to avoid cutting in future. This *bandh* has also been severely affected by the formation of rain cuts and toes erosion by wave action of the river and *chaur* water.

Naini Bandh in P.-S. Chapra Muffasil.

This runs along the left bank of the river Tel from Chapra-Siwan railway embankment to 8 miles northwards. This *bandh* is meant for protection of Chapra town mainly as well as a vast belt of land, about 5 miles in width, extending from the *bandh* eastwards, right up to Sonepur from the Gogra spill and Gogra back-water through the river Tel. From 0 to 4½ miles length, the *bandh* is maintained by the P. W. D. (Roads and Buildings) and from 4½ to 5½ miles by private parties and rest, from 5½ to 8 miles, has been constructed by this Department after the experience of flood of 1948. The *bandh* came in the charge of the Irrigation Department in 1948. A remodelling estimate of Rs. 3,31,057 was sanctioned in the year 1949-50. Eighty-five per cent of earthwork provided in the original estimate was completed in the year 1951, and for the rest, a revised estimate has already been submitted to the Government.

This *bandh* remained safe in place where it is complete but near village Koteya, where the *bandh* is incomplete, the river Tel spilled, by an average depth of 1 foot to 1 foot 6 inches and crossed Chapra-Baniapur District Board road and caused inundation

of eastern side *chaur*. The District Board road from the first mile to the seventh mile was under knee-deep water due to accumulation of rain water. During the flood of 1948, flood level was generally found to be only 6 inches below the crest level of the old *bandh* and at many places the *bandh* was overtopped, as a result of which twelve breaches had occurred, hence this remodelling was done. In this remodelling of the *bandh*, provision of 6 feet crest width and side slopes of 1 : 2 in the riverside and 1 : 3 on the countryside was made, and accordingly the work was executed. The construction of sluices, sanctioned in original estimate, could not be taken up due to some technical difficulties.

Saran Embankments.

It is along the right bank of the Gandak (Narayani). They remained intact and no flooding took place from the river Gandak during the year.

Flood of 1954.

In 1954, the district was again visited by a flood as a result of the rise in the level of the Gandak, Sarju, Daha and the Ganga. The neighbouring villages of the thanas of Kuchaikot, Barauli, Baikunthpur, Gopalganj, Masrakh, Marhowrah and Parsa were affected by the overflowing of the Gandak, parts of Siswan, Manjhi and Revelganj by the Sarju and the Daha and parts of Sonepur and Dighwara by the Ganga flood. About 292 square miles were submerged, 275 villages with a population of 2,90,539 became victim of the flood and 2,776 houses were damaged. The standing *bhadai*, *aghani* and sugarcane crops with an area of 72,230 acres, 39,055 acres and 25,815 acres, respectively, were affected. Prompt relief measures were taken by the Government to relieve the distress of the people. 18,403 maunds of grain were distributed among the needy as gratuitous relief, Rs. 4,05,560 as the natural calamities loans, Rs 45, 930 as house-building grant, 12,350 maunds of foodgrains were sold at subsidised rate and 14,000 pieces of cloth were distributed free of cost.

Flood of 1955.

The flood of 1955 was caused due to the overflow of the rivers Ganga and Gandak, affecting the total area of 140½ miles of the thanas Revelganj, Masrakh, Marhowrah, Parsa and Sonepur in the Sadar subdivision, Siswan and Darauli in the Siwan subdivision and Gopalganj, Kuchaikot, Barauli and Baikunthpur in the Gopalganj subdivision. About 108 houses and 8,340 acres of the standing crops were damaged. As a measure of relief, grains, cloths and kerosene oil were distributed as gratuitous relief, Rs. 1,995 as house-building grant, Rs. 99,140 as *taccavi* loan, Rs. 645 as cash doles and Rs. 1,15,320 as the natural calamity loans.

Flood of 1956

There was flood in parts of the thanas Manjhi, Revelganj, Chapra Muffasil, Dighwara and Sonepur in the Sadar subdivision, Darauli, Siswan, Raghunathpur, Guthni, Siwan, Barharia and Maharajganj in the Siwan subdivision, Gopalganj, Bhorey, Kateya, Mirganj and Kuchaikot in the Gopalganj subdivision due to a sudden rise in the Ganga, Gandak and the Gogra. The flood water covered an area of 148 square miles with 400 villages having a population of 1,44,900. About 58,800 acres of *bhadai*, 6,230 acres of sugarcane and 7,100 houses were damaged by this flood. Relief measures in shape of 165 maunds of gram, 600 maunds of rice, 100 maunds of wheat were distributed as gratuitous relief and Rs. 6,152 as house-building grant. Agriculturist loan of Rs. 1,21,375 and Rs. 25,000 as natural calamity loan were advanced among the cultivators.

Famines and Natural Calamities.

In Saran, famine is caused due to the failure of two of the three crops. One of the most striking features of the district is the presence, in nearly all parts of it, of large low-lying tracts of land, in which only *aghani* paddy is grown. If the *aghani* crop is a failure, such tracts are bound to suffer severely even though the high lands, by which they are surrounded, may have yielded good *bhadai* and *rabi* crops.

Famine of 1770.

The heavy flood of August, 1768, was followed by an intense and continued drought, which caused famine in 1770 in all parts of Bihar. In June, 1770, the Honourable John Cartier, the President and Governor, informed the Select Committee that mortality in Bihar amounted to nearly two hundred thousand. To relieve the distress of the cultivators, one lakh was remitted from the revenue of *Sarkar Saran*.

Famine of 1783.

In this famine the Collector prohibited export of grain, wanted to force the dealers to sell to any one who wanted it and to break down monopolies. His idea was to confiscate the grain in case of breaches of order and to distribute them to the poor as charity.

Famine of 1866.

The famine of 1866 was caused due to the failure of crops in three successive years. The autumn crops of 1866 had partially failed, and *rabi* crops of 1865 had been severely damaged by hailstorm and next year there was failure of both the paddy and winter crops. Relief works were started at Siwan and Rs. 3,000 was sent to indigo planters for making of roads. Funds ran short in April and nothing more was done till June, when distribution of gratuitous relief was started at eleven centres. Road work was begun again in July and

1,800 persons were employed till September. Altogether 8,175 persons are said to have died of starvation and disease.

Famine of 1874.

The famine of 1874 was due to deficient and abnormally distributed rainfall in 1873, aggravated by unfavourable weather and short crops in the preceding year. The monsoon did not break till late in June, there having been no rain at all and then over 26 inches, out of a total of 33 inches fall in July and August. Relief works were opened in January and by the 10th of February there were 70,000 persons attending them. By the beginning of June, the average daily attendance had risen to 2,26,000. Unfortunately there was a high flood in September, the Ganga inundating Chapra and nearly a sixth of the district being more or less submerged. In the first half of September, the average daily number on relief works was 1,21,719 and the number of charitable relief 60,873. Good rain at the end of September saved the paddy and the relief operations were soon brought to an end. No lives were lost by starvation. During the year 610 tons of grain were distributed, 6,410 tons sold for cash, 17,894 tons advanced on loans, and 11,487 tons paid on wages. Besides, Rs. 2,92,663 was distributed in cash, Rs. 6,41,577 advanced on loan and Rs. 15,06,412 paid on wages.

Famine of 1897.

This famine was due to the failure of the rainfall of the two preceding years. The situation was further precipitated owing to the failure of the three asterisms, *Hathiya*, *Chitra* and *Swati*, the most important for the *aghani* and *rabi* cops. Gratuitous relief and test works were organised to relieve the distress of the people. The number of relief works opened at any time was 52, the largest number of persons employed on them at any time was 23,711 in May, 1897, and the number in receipt of gratuitous relief never exceeded 60,605.

There have not been any famine in the present century although there has been scarcity in certain areas in different years. In 1908-09 the crops were poor owing to uneven distribution of rainfall and the most affected pockets were Manjhi and Darauli thanas. The prices of the essential commodities were unusually high, affecting adversely the poorer classes of the district. Land Improvement and Agricultural Loans of Rs. 48,000 were given in the distressed area of Darauli and Manjhi thanas. In 1917, scarcity conditions prevailed in Sadar subdivision owing to uneven rainfall.

Scarcity of 1952.

The period under review witnessed the total failure of the *hathiya* rains, which caused scarcity condition in the whole State of Bihar. The scarcity condition became more acute in Saran as it is a chronic deficit area in the State. The agriculturist and especially

the landless labourers were hard hit. The State Government adopted relief measures to meet the situation and consequently 1,585 fair price shops were opened for distribution of foodgrains to check the soaring high prices. A large number of hard manual schemes and light manual schemes were opened in the district to provide employment to the landless labourers and thereby preserve their purchasing capacity; so a sum of Rs. 1,35,322 and Rs. 1,590 was spent over these two kinds of schemes, respectively. A sum of Rs. 63,676 was distributed as gratuitous relief and Rs. 9,94,268 as *taccavi* loans to cultivators.

Scarcity of 1957.

In 1957 there was extensive failure of crops due to hailstorm in the beginning of the year and to make the condition worse the wheat crop was adversely affected by the rust. The situation became all the more acute due to the complete failure of the *hathiya* rains, which affected both *bhadai* and *aghani* crops. Consequently scarcity conditions prevailed throughout the district. It was estimated that 80 per cent of the *aghani* crops and 30 per cent of *bhadai* crops were lost due to drought. Relief measures were taken by the Government to alleviate the sufferings of the people; 750 fair price shops were opened for the distribution of foodgrains up till December, 1957. Hard manual scheme was also taken at a cost of Rs. 7,672, 300 maunds of wheat and 55 maunds of rice were distributed as gratuitous relief and Rs. 4,84,570 as agriculturist loans and Rs. 49,975 as natural calamity loans. A sum of Rs. 500 was distributed as cash dole.

Earthquake of 1934.

The shock of the great earthquake of Bihar was felt in the district, but its havoc was not as great as in other parts of Bihar. Many mud-built houses either collapsed or were partially damaged. It is reported that 100 persons in Parsa and 50 persons in Garkha thanas lost their lives due to collapse of the houses. A large number of wells collapsed and got silted and river beds became covered with sand thrown up through the cracks in the earth. There were no lasting effects of the earthquake on the soils affecting agriculture.

Fire.

There was an outbreak of conflagration, continuously for seven days in Sonepur area in 1905. About 500 villages were reduced to ashes and there was a huge loss of property. There has been no reported fire since, damaging any sizable number of villages.

CHAPTER V.

INDUSTRIES.

OLD TIME INDUSTRIES.

There is no direct reference to any important industries either in ancient or mediæval times in any of the authoritative books. People were, apparently, entirely dependent on agriculture and their necessities of life were locally sought to be met in the villages. Of the old industries the wood-worker, the metal-worker, the tanner, the weaver and the potter deserve special mention. The wood-worker or carpenter not only made agricultural implements but also made boats to cross the rivers. Saran being a riverine tract required a great number of boats for crossing the important navigable rivers, such as the Ganga, the Gandak and the Gogra. Boat building was a flourishing industry of the district but started declining in the eighteenth century. The early British administrators being the servants of a trading company, the Magistrate of Saran was frequently asked to report on and had to encourage boat-building industry. It appears from a letter, dated the 20th March 1819, that the Magistrate of *zillah* Tiperah was contacted to send carpenters to make boats in Saran. The Magistrate of Saran, however, was informed that no body was willing to go from Tiperah to serve there at the rate of Rs. 50 per month, as the rate of pay was considered too inadequate. Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. XI, published in 1877, mentions that "The boats used on the Saran rivers are principally of the following descriptions – (1) The *ulakh* has a sharp bow and a rounded side; (2) the *melni* is a boat similar to the *ulakh* and must be carefully distinguished from the Tirhut *melhani* which is a flat bottomed boat, of a rectangular shape, used for ferries, and where the water is shallow, and of a low velocity; (3) the *patila* comes from the west; it is a broad boat, and does not draw much water; (4) the *chaina* and (5) *guria* also come from the west; (6) the *dinghi* and (7) *pansi* are small ferry boats". The boat-building industry has declined. But small size boats, i.e., *dinghis* are still manufactured in village Sonaut of the Baikunthpur police-station. The boat-building industry of Saran has been taken much beyond the limits of Saran district by her people. Many of the *ghats* and ferries of Northern India and of East Pakistan are still held by men of Saran district who maintain their own fleet of boats.

The metal-worker or smith worked on metal and catered to the needs of the villages. This industry is still carried on by a community known as *lohars* and *sonars*. Workers on leather were known as *chamars* and they still supply the villagers with thongs for their whips and fastenings for their ploughs, repairing the latter when necessary. The leather bucket or *mot*, which is still an indigenous irrigational contrivance, was known to the people and

was manufactured by the leather-workers. But now it is generally imported from the other districts of Bihar. Weavers included men as well as women. Cloth manufacture was an important industry of the district. This industry received a great set-back in the early nineteenth century. As early as 1856, the Collector of Saran in his letter no. 128, dated the 27th October 1856, reported to the Commissioner on the state of the cloth manufacture and the probable future demand for English cotton goods in Saran. This industry had declined particularly owing to the increased price of raw materials. Revelganj, once a great cotton mart of Saran, had registered a decline and the weavers in large number had given up weaving. The local imports from the north-west had largely decreased. The cotton found its way to Calcutta and England and in many parts of the district, the manufacture dwindled to some manufacture of the local grown cotton. The causes of the decay were the same as those operating in Bengal and other parts of India, i.e., the policy of the British Parliament, the competition of cheap goods produced by machinery and the unwillingness or inability of the then Indian Government to protect or encourage Indian arts and crafts.

OPIUM.

In 1773, the monopoly for providing opium from Saran was granted to one Mir Mannir, who had been employed by the Patna Board, and was best acquainted with the mode of managing. He was to answer for any outstanding balances, and was to deliver the opium at Rs. 320 per maund. In 1785, it was resolved to lease the contract to the highest bidder, and this system was carried on for some years. In 1793, the price paid for opium to the cultivator was Rs. 1-14-0 per seer. The contractor was to engage to deliver 6,800 maunds of Bihar opium, in chest containing two maunds each; he was to receive, in addition to the contract price, a gratuity of Rs. 50 per chest, but for every chest short of 3,400, he was to pay a fine of Rs. 300. In 1797-98 the advances were Rs. 1,12,050; in 1798-99 Rs. 2,67,100; in 1799-1800 Rs. 2,67,300; and in 1800-1801 Rs. 2,28,127. The cultivators were to have their option whether they would cultivate opium or not.

Statistics of opium cultivation in Saran from 1863-64 to 1873-74 as given in Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Vol. XI, are given below :—

Years.	Subdivision.	Area cultivated.	Produce of each subdivision.	Average produce per bigha.
1	2	3	4	5
		B. K.	Mds. sr. ch. t.	Srs. ch. t.
1863-64	.. Chapra ..	33,678 19	6,130 14 14 2	7 4 2
	Siwan	41,780 12	7,397 13 11 2	7 1 1

Years.	Subdivision.	Area cultivated.		Produce of each subdivision.				Average produce per bigha.		
1	2	3		4				5		
		B.	K.	Mds.	sr.	ch.	t.	Srs.	ch.	t.
1864-65 ..	Chapra ..	33,230	15	4,368	6	14	2	5	4	0
	Siwan ..	40,992	6	3,812	24	15	1	3	11	2
1865-66	Chapra ..	33,771	10	5,620	17	9	2	6	11	2
	Siwan ..	41,729	6	4,091	4	6	0	3	14	3
1866-67 ..	Chapra ..	37,645	9	5,979	32	13	1	6	5	3
	Siwan ..	44,581	7	6,623	31	4	0	5	15	0
1867-68 ..	Chapra ..	38,016	0	4,418	3	6	1	4	9	1
	Siwan ..	45,026	0	5,864	8	11	0	5	3	1
1868-69 ..	Chapra ..	35,098	19	4,226	11	15	2	4	13	0
	Siwan ..	44,505	19	5,301	16	1	2	4	12	0
1869-70 ..	Chapra ..	39,176	7	6,091	9	12	0	6	3	2
	Siwan .	46,959	1	7,256	19	12	0	6	3	0
1870-71 ..	Chapra ..	38,743	0	3,998	1	15	2	4	2	0
	Siwan ..	47,742	0	4,946	11	6	0	4	2	1
1871-72 ..	Chapra ..	39,731	0	4,252	27	4	0	4	4	2
	Siwan ..	48,068	0	4,429	0	6	0	3	11	0
1872-73 ..	Chapra ..	37,643	0	3,968	27	3	2	4	3	2
	Siwan ..	44,373	0	4,876	36	9	2	4	6	1
1873-74 ..	Chapra ..	34,317	0	5,096	23	9	1	5	15	0
	Siwan ..	41,566	0	6,567	37	13	3	5	5	3

The *Survey and Settlement Report* of 1893–1901 mentions that "in respect of opium Saran is second only to Champaran, having 3.13 per cent under that crop as against 3.7 per cent in the latter district, but as has been noticed by Mr Stevenson Moor in his *Final Report on the Settlement of Champaran,* that district is the country where the opium crop is cultivated with least care, and the average outturn in Saran is considerably greater". From the *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations* of 1915–1921 it appears that the cultivation of opium had been mostly abandoned. It was grown only on Government account. A particular reason for the decline was that it was becoming year by year less profitable to cultivators. Cultivators were gradually taking to the cultivation of sugarcane,

tobacco and other cash crops. The price of cereals and other grains had gone up owing to the increase in the population of the district, while the price paid for opium remained stationary. There was no wonder that the cultivators grew less of opium. The world market of opium, and particularly the great market of China was lost and the cultivation of poppy declined.

INDIGO.

When the British had stepped in Saran district there were mainly three industries—indigo, opium and sugar of which only the last remains. It appears that the cultivation of indigo was introduced in this district near about 1793-94 when Messrs. Ivory and Blake obtained permission from Government to build a factory at Akbarpur, now Sitalpur in Sonepur thana.

Any description of indigo industry should mention the name of Monsieur Louis Bonnaud who was the first indigo planter in India. Indigo was indigenous in various parts of India. In *Ain-i-Akbari* there is mention of excellent indigo being produced in Ahmedabad in Gujarat and that it was regularly exported to Constantinople and other places. The same source mentions that the highest price realised per maund for superior indigo produced at Biana near Agra was Rs. 16. In 1631, there was a large contract for the supply of indigo to the English at Agra and large loss was sustained as it found no ready sale either in Persia or England. Bernier had also mentioned about indigo in 1663.

Louis Bonnaud was at first a resident of Gondalpara, at Chandannagar. From Chandannagar he proceeded to Malda district. In 1814 he had joined the Bankipore concern and he was for some time proprietor of Nayahatti indigo concern in the district of Jessore. As mentioned in M. Wilson's *History of Bihar*: "Lastly he was the managing proprietor of the large indigo concern of Kalna in Burdwan, including the Mirzapore Indigo Factory not far from Krishnaghur. He terminated his connection with the Kalna Concern in 1819 when he made no less than 1,400 maunds of indigo, the largest quantity of produce yielded by probably any single concern in Bengal up to that period. He being part owner of it, however caused him much loss, trouble, and anxiety owing to the principal proprietor, Mr. Edward Majoribanks of the Bengal Civil Service, who was deeply involved owing to losses on the turf, having mortgaged the property to Messrs. Fairlie Fergusson and Co."

The same book mentions: "In the 'Report of the Proceedings of the East India Company, in regard to the culture and manufacture of indigo', it is stated that it was a well-known article of importation during the first century of their trade with this country; and in 1779-80 the Directors thereof used their best endeavours to increase the quantity and improve the quality of indigo, entering into a contract for the purpose with Mr. James Prinsep. That gentleman wrote to Lord North, in a letter, dated the 25th January, 1780, that

he wished to introduce ' indigo, sugar and tobacco, into Great Britain from the East Indies ' and in a subsequent letter to the same nobleman he stated he had ' with the utmost trouble and expense ' collected round him Europeans bred to different arts and science, as well as the most intelligent mechanics and planters of the East '."

" Although it must be admitted, as will be evident from the above collection of facts, that indigo was produced in India from ancient times, yet there can be no doubt that the manufacture of indigo according to the system practised in the West Indies, was introduced by Europeans in this country some time after the establishment of the British Government, and previous to that they do not appear to have had any connection with it as planters or manufacturers. A work on indigo planting published in 1835, and now out of print, written by Mr. John Phipps, states, and we believe quite correctly that the first European indigo planter in India was the late Monsieur Louis Bonnaud, and as, doubtless, any particulars regarding the list of one who introduced this great industry in its present form in this country will be interesting to all, more especially the indigo planters. We venture to put together in a connected narrative information derived from certain notes kindly placed at our disposal by the eldest and sole surviving son of the gentleman referred to, with free permission to make such use of them as we may think proper. This gentleman is now in the 15th year of his age, and takes a commendable pride in being a son of the first European indigo planter in India, and in this respect it may aptly be said of him *primus in Indis*. We have dedicated this slight biographical sketch to Mr. William Bonnaud as he is best entitled to have his name associated in connection with it, specially as he has been good enough to supply us with materials for constructing it ".

Dr. Ivory was the Civil Surgeon of Chapra while Mr. Blake was the Assay Master at the Patna Mint. Mr. Shore in 1794 had obtained permission to start a factory at Darauli and after that a number of other English adventurers entered the field. They were the pioneers in this district.

Indigo plantation by the Europeans was controlled. The Europeans who wanted to start a factory had to take permission of the administration before starting it. Most of the factories in Saran district, which came to some prominence later, were built after 1847. Before 1847 there were smaller concerns at Ramcollah, Rajahputtee, Chaitanpursa, Jullalpore and some others.

It will not be correct to say that all the indigo concerns were owned by Europeans. Arrowah factory in the fifties came to be owned by Kazee Ramzan Ali who had a number of European managers. Two of his European managers were W. James and Tom Martin, who lived at Tilpah House which later on became the Saran Planters' Club. Kazee Ramzan Ali did a lot to spread indigo cultivation. He was trusted by the Government and during the 1857 insurrection

when the Commissioner ordered all the Europeans out of Chapra, Kazee Ramzan Ali was put in charge and acted to the perfect satisfaction of the Government. The Arrowah concern, however, changed hands during the Kazee's life time. The Zumunpore indigo concern was built by Munsi Zawwad Hussain who was the Judge's *Sheristadar* at Chapra in 1864-65. Gopalpore factory was built by Upendra Narain Singh in about 1867. Some of the other factories which were important in the later part of the nineteenth century were Bansghat which was closed when M. Wilson wrote his book *History of Behar* referred to in 1908, Balla Barhoga factory which had prominently figured in the aftermath of 1857 insurrection and Sudowah factory. Some of the other indigo concerns of the nineteenth century, many of which lingered on till about the twenties of the twentieth century, were Bhamo, Behrowlie, Hariharpore, Nawadah factories which also belonged at one time to Kazee Ramzan Ali, Jogapore with the two works, Bansopalli and Kahlla, Partabpur, Rajahputtee, Ramkola, Sadowah, Seereepore (owned by the Maharaja of Hathwa), Gopalpur, Geurs and Kehumia. Two Chapra bankers, Ganesh Lall and Gopal Dass, also owned indigo factories at one time as did the two Patna bankers, Muhomed Khan and Syud Iltaf Hasain.

Reference must be made to Mr. Grand who was sent to Tirhut as Collector in 1782 and was in a way a pioneer in indigo cultivation and manufacture. Grand himself had left an account that he had built three indigo factories and he conducted the manufacture of indigo after the manner of Europeans. Mr. Grand, however, got into trouble over his private indigo concerns and was relieved of his appointment. There is, however, no doubt that Grand did a lot in improving the indigo cultivation in Bihar.

The records show that up to about 1850 the cultivation of indigo combined with the cultivation of sugarcane and manufacture of sugar. Between 1850 and 1898 the sugar industry was practically ousted from the district and indigo industry continued to flourish till the end of the nineteenth century when there were 35 factories with 36 outworks and 45,500 acres under cultivation. From then onwards the industry had to compete with artificial dyes widely imported and from the high price of foodgrains and consequent demand for land in Bihar.

Indigo cultivation had its other side as well. The European planters had a very great say in the administration of the district and with the help of the administrators they managed to consolidate holdings in order to get a consolidated block for the cultivation of indigo. They saw to the making of good roads for their indigo carts to pass. They, however, used to force the *raiyats* to cultivate indigo even if the cultivation was not as profitable as the cultivation of foodgrain. The growing consciousness of the *raiyats* of their rights led to a certain combination and agitation among them

not to grow indigo. In Champaran district there was a wide agitation in the first decade of the twentieth century against indigo cultivation. There was a combination among the *raiyats* not to grow indigo and a large number of arrests were made. The planters were given judiciary powers which went to demoralise the *raiyats*. The administration appreciated the difficulties of the *raiyats* but it was difficult to curb the European planters who were mostly in the hands of their *amlas*. Some of the European planters became absentees and left their concerns in the hands of junior and inexperienced men. The troubles in Champaran district had their repercussions in Saran as well where also the conditions were almost the same.

Champaran district was visited by Mahatma Gandhi in 1916 in connection with the campaign of the *raiyats* for the cultivation of the indigo. There was a great agitation and ultimately Government were forced to remove many of the anomalies of indigo cultivation by law. Gandhiji's visit and his great work undermined the indigo cultivation in Bihar which was already in an uneconomic position. All these factors combined with the import of synthetic indigo and the natural inclination to cultivate such crops that yielded more money led to the decline of the indigo cultivation. The indigo concerns slowly turned to sugarcane plantation or ordinary farms producing grains. Most of the European planters wound up their interest and left the country by the twenties of the present century. Affluent Indian zamindars or big cultivators acquired the indigo concerns from them and have converted them into agricultural farms.

SALTPETRE.

Saltpetre was formerly one of the most important industries of Saran. The soil of Saran is highly saliferous; and the extraction of saltpetre and salt had for long afforded employment to a community of labourers who came to be known as *Nuniyas* (*nun* : salt). When Bernier visited India in the reign of Aurangzeb, he had observed the extensive saltpetre industry in Bengal. The saltpetre zone was more or less in Bihar. He had mentioned that a huge quantity of saltpetre was imported from Patna. By 1660 the factories at Patna and Singhia (now in Muzaffarpur) were established from where an extensive saltpetre trade radiated through the rivers. There were smaller trade points for saltpetre in Saran. Saran was once the best saltpetre producing district. Thousands of persons were employed in scraping this natural efflorescence of the soil.

It appears that the indigenous saltpetre industry was first exploited by the Dutch who had established a factory at Chapra even before 1666. Tavernier in his description of Patna, which he had visited with Bernier in 1666, mentions: "The Holland Company have a house there, by reason of their trade in saltpetre, which they referred as a great town called Choupar (Chapra)". Later the

English were also attracted to Chapra for trade in saltpetre, which was in great demand for the manufacture of gunpowder. The trade must have been subject to interruption, for in 1711 the Council at Fort William learnt from the Agent at the Patna factory that a formidable rebel had plundered Chapra, and when the *Nawab* sent a force of 2,000 men against the marauders " they fled, setting fire to all before them, amongst the rest our petre godown by which it is feared we shall lose about 500 maunds ".

With the advent of the English the Dutch had lost their monopoly in saltpetre and a business rivalry started between the two. By 1700 the sign of decline of the Hollanders was perceptible in Saran so far as the saltpetre trade was concerned. But their factory at Daulatganj (a part of Chapra) was still quite formidable and the Dutch boats used to ply with merchandise for some years following 1700. The saltpetre collected by the Dutch in Saran was usually sent to Patna Factory. The refining of the saltpetre was done in the *karkhanas* at Singhia, Chapra and Futwah. The Dutch had brought boilers from Holland as described by Tavernier; they had initial difficulty, because the people would not supply them with sufficient quantity of whey without which saltpetre could not be bleached. The value of saltpetre increased with the whiteness of its colour and its transparency.

Even as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century, saltpetre was one of the flourishing industries of the district. In *Hamilton's Description of Hindostan* (1820) it is mentioned that the greater part of the saltpetre intended for the company's investment was procured from Hajipur and the adjacent division of Saran. W. W. Hunter in the *Statistical Account of Bengal,* published in 1877, had mentioned that " The Godna or Revelganj saltpetre was formerly much esteemed ". After that there had been a great set back in the saltpetre industry owing to the low price and the withdrawal of the European capital. During the First World War (1914—1918) there was a temporary revival of the industry and the output of the district had increased from 72,000 maunds in 1913-14 to 93,000 maunds in 1917-18. There was naturally a great demand for saltpetre for the manufacture of munitions. After the cessation of war a great slump occurred. In 1923-24 the output was only 22,000 maunds. The industry had declined owing to the importation of Chilian nitrate and of a cheap German nitrate. There do not appear to be authenticated official records of the output after 1923.

The price of ordinary saltpetre in the eighteenth century varied from Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 per maund, while under competition it went up to Rs. 7 per maund. The actual cost of refining was very small, about 9 pies per maund. The Europeans used to export annually about 10 million pounds of saltpetre and they sold for about 5 *d.* a pound. This margin of profit, after deducting all the expenditure, was staggering but very little of it went to the *Nuniyas* who actually

slogged. Their daily wages were 5 pice only or they were employed on a contract basis for working in a particular portion for a specified sum.

The *Nuniyas* have now turned to other occupations. A few of them still scrape out the natural saltpetre a bit and sell the quantity locally.

DYES.

The dye industry was in a flourishing condition in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XI, published in 1877, it is mentioned that "The two principal dyes grown in this district are indigo and safflower; and from a combination of these two in varying proportions are produced many beautiful tints, most of which, however, are not permanent". The reason for the decline of the indigo industry has been described previously. So far as the safflower or *kusum phul* (*Carthamus tinctorius*) is concerned, it was chiefly grown in Basantpur, Manjhi, Masrakh and Siwan thanas. The greater part of the produce was used by the cultivators themselves, the rest was purchased by the professionals (*Rangrez*) in various parts of the district. Some of the produce also found its way to Nepal, Gorakhpur, Ghazipur and places on the other side of the Ganga. The average outturn of safflower in Saran was estimated to be about 2,000 maunds per annum; and the average price per maund Rs. 36-10-0. No European capital or agency was engaged in this industry. The other substances, which were used for dyeing purposes are: *Tinkaphul*, the flowers of *Cadrela toona*; *palas ka phul*, flowers of the tead, *Butea frondosa*, *anar ka chilka*, bark of the pomegranate and *Punica granatum*. The average price at which these dyes were sold was as follows: *tinka phul*, 12 seers per rupee, *singharhar ka phul* 1½ seers per rupee. *palas ka phul*, 12 seers per rupee; and *anar ka chilka*, 5 seers per rupee. The *tun* tree and bastard teak were not cultivated; but the *singharhar* and pomegranate were grown in gardens as ornamental shrubs. Very little dye was exported, nearly all being used for local consumption.

There was another species of dye produced by the lac insect, found on pipal trees. It was estimated that about 200 maunds of the dye were exported to Calcutta. As mentioned under indigo, the dye industry has suffered from the competition of the artificial dye of Europe.

INDUSTRIES DURING THE CURRENT CENTURY.

Sources of power supply.

There are no hydro-electric or thermal stations in the district.

The industries that are run by power have either their own electricity plants or derive the power from the Electric Supply Companies or from the power-generating stations maintained by

Government. The Sugar Mills and other big industries have all their own power-generating plants.

MINING AND HEAVY INDUSTRIES

There are no mining and heavy industries in Saran. There are no minerals except nodular limestone (*kankar*) of good quality which is found throughout the district except in the north-west corner. It is used for metalling roads and for ballast on the railway.

LARGE-SCALE INDUSTRY.

The sugar industry is now a principal industry of the district. The sugar industry has passed through several vicissitudes. As has been mentioned before, the industry faced a decline between 1850 and 1878 and had to give way to indigo. But with the advent of the twentieth century and especially after the First World War the cultivation of indigo practically disappeared from the district and its place was taken by sugarcane. The Cawnpore Sugar Works was started in 1904, while the New Siwan Sugar and *Gur* Refining Company was established in 1918. The third factory, the Bihar Sugar Works, Pachrukhi, was started in 1921. The other sugar mills were established later.

In the thirties there was a tremendous fall in the price of grain and other crops, while the price of sugar was much higher than the other crops. The sugar industry of the country received beneficial *tariff* protection with the passing of the Sugar Industries Protection Act in 1932 for a period of fourteen years.

An important development in the field of sugar industry was the legislation of 1937, known as the Bihar Sugar Factories Control Act, 1937. According to this Act, some area round each factory is reserved to each factory, of which the factory concerned is bound to purchase cane. Some factories, moreover, have some lands of their own or leased to them on which they themselves grow cane but most of the sugarcane is purchased from the cultivators. As it is worth while for the manufacturers to make sowing advances in order to insure that good cane is grown and properly cultivated, the cultivators get a double benefit. They get cheap loans for the expenses of cultivation, and prompt and fair payment for their produce.

The Bihar Sugar Factories Control Act, 1937, gave an impetus to the formation of the canegrowers' co-operative societies. At the outset, these societies were organised by the growers themselves but now they are organised by the Government and are registered under the Co-operative Societies Act. The internal management of these societies is entrusted to a Committee of Management consisting of educated members and the supervision and audit is done by the auditors appointed by the Government. These Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies, operating in the area of each sugar factory, are affiliated to the Central Co-operative Development and Cane-

Marketing Union which enters into contract with the factory and regulates supply of cane on behalf of the Societies. There is also a Provincial Canegrowers' Co-operative Association and a Provincial Co-operative Federation to which all these Societies and the Central Unions are affiliated. In 1956-57, there were 2,161 Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies with 1,05,866 members and the number of Cane Marketing Unions was 25 with a membership of 2,191.

So far as the financial aspect of these Societies are concerned, they have their share capital but they also get some commission on the cane-supply through them. Besides, they also get loans from the Co-operative Bank. The value of share capital of these Societies is generally considerably less than the actual amount of help given by the Societies to their members. In 1956-57, the share capital of the Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies was 3,01,948, reserve fund Rs. 2,63,185, own capital Rs. 5,65,143, deposit Rs. 66,659 and the working capital Rs. 13,01,193.

Sugar Industry in the Nineteenth Century and the beginning of the Twentieth Century.

W. W. Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Bengal,* Volume XI, published in 1877, has mentioned that sugar was principally made at Sarya, Semeria, Guthni and Patan in the west of the district, where sugarcane was largely grown. As has been mentioned above, the cultivation of sugar received a great set back between 1850 and 1878 and gave place to indigo. But at the beginning of the twentieth century sugar replaced indigo again. The resuscitation of the sugar industry was pioneered by the India Development Company which established a head factory in Muzaffarpur district with a branch at Barhoga in Saran. After the closing of the factory at Barhoga, modern sugar works were started at Marhowrah by the Cawnpore Sugar Works in 1904. At present there are seven sugar factories in the district. The other three sugar concerns, i.e., the Indian Sugar Works, Siwan, Maharajganj Sugar Mill and the *Gur* Sugar Works, Siwan, have been closed.

There were two main reasons for the decline of the industry till the beginning of the twentieth century. The first was the difficulty of transport and the higher prices obtained for indigo for the same labour and land. The principal market for sugar was Ghazipore in Uttar Pradesh where it was sold at eleven rupees per maund in 1877. The Collector in his Annual Report for 1872-73 had mentioned that the principal mart for sugar in the district was Revelganj. In 1872 about 43,019 maunds of sugar were exported by boat to Patna from Revelganj. A country boat took one or two days to go from Revelganj to Patna in rains, two or three days in other seasons; 15 days to Calcutta in the rains, 40 in the dry weather. With the development of communications, these difficulties have been removed to a great extent but still a lot has to be done in this

direction. Sugar industry here faces competition from the south of India.

The Sugar Factories Control Act of 1937 had its effects. Under the provision of the Act the price level and marketing of sugarcane were regularised, a cane cess was levied and an Advisory Committee was set up to advise the Cane Commissioner on the issue of allotment of area to different factories.

The minimum price of sugarcane is fixed by the Government every year on the basis of cost of cultivation, output and the price level of competitive crops. This minimum price is normally paid by each factory and their agents. The cane price varied between annas 5 to Rs. 2 per maund from 1937 to 1952. The price was Rs. 1-5-0 per maund at outstations and Rs. 1-7-0 per maund at factory gate in 1956-57. The cane price has to be paid within a fortnight from the date of weighment or within a week of a subsequent demand. Sugarcane is supplied in bullock-carts and trucks which are weighed at the factory gate or at the outlying purchasing centres. The receipts indicating the weight of cane along with the amount of price payable to the seller is issued to the persons delivering cane. These receipts are subsequently presented for payment at the payment centres and the payment is made with a copy of payment sheet delivered to payees. The main sugar mills are described below.

S. K G. Sugar Mills, Ltd.—Situated at Mirganj on the North-Eastern Railway, it is managed by Messrs. Dalmia Jain and Co., the head office of which is at Dalmia Nagar in Shahabad district. It came into being in 1933. Its daily crushing capacity is about 1,400 to 1,500 tons. The factory is fitted with double sulphitation system of production. In 1952-53 it crushed 29.50 lakh maunds of sugarcane. The sugar recovery was 10 per cent and molasses, 3.3 per cent. The sugar produced was 2,95,000 maunds as against 3,48,553 maunds in 1956-57. The average number of persons employed in this factory was 1,000 in 1952-53 as against 1,500 in 1956-57 and it paid Rs. 9 lakhs as wages. It has one Manager, one Chief Chemist and one Chief Engineer. It maintains one allopathic and one *ayurvedic* dispensaries for the treatment of its staff. The welfare of the workers is looked after by a Welfare Officer who is a wholetime employee of the management. The capital investment is near about Rs. 35 lakhs.

Sasamusa Sugar Works, Ltd.—Located at Sasamusa on the North-Eastern Railway, its managing agents are Monsell and Company, Calcutta. It has a capacity of crushing 800 tons daily and is fitted with double sulphitation system of production. During 1952-53, it crushed 15 lakh maunds of sugarcane with 10 per cent recovery of sugar. It has manufactured 1,50,000 maunds of sugar. The labour strength of the factory is about 725 daily. It maintains a high school for the education of children of the workers. A doctor has been appointed for the benefit of the labourers and their families.

New Siwan Sugar and Gur Refining Company, Ltd.—Established in 1918, this factory is situated about a mile west of Siwan on the North-Eastern Railway. It is on lease to the Standard Refinery and Distillery Company, Ltd., and its managing agents are Messrs. Karamchand Thapar and Bros., Ltd., Calcutta. The daily crushing capacity of it is 900 tons and is fitted with double sulphitation system of production. In the year 1956-57, it crushed sugarcane to a tune of 17 lakh maunds and its recovery was 10 per cent, sugar produced being about 1,70,000 maunds. During the season it employed in 1952-53, 750 persons daily as against 1,193 in 1956-57. The factory is managed by a Manager and a Chief Engineer. It maintains one dispensary for the treatment of the labourers.

The Bihar Sugar Works, Pachrukhi.—The factory is situated near the Pachrukhi Railway Station of the North-Eastern Railway. Its managing agents are Messrs. Bakubhai Ambalal and Company, Ahmedabad. It was established in 1921. A distillery is also associated with the sugar factory which runs on the production of molasses. The crushing capacity of the factory is 1,100 tons per day and it is equipped with double carbonation system of production. In 1952-53. it crushed 25 lakh maunds of sugarcane and the recovery of the sugar was 10 per cent with the total production of 2,50,000 maunds of sugar as against 2,51,197 maunds in 1956-57. During crushing season in 1957, it employed the average number of workers of about 1,400 per day and paid Rs. 7,09,116 as wages. It maintains one dispensary and a middle school for the welfare of the workers.

Bharat Sugar Mills, Ltd., Sidhwalia.—The factory was established in 1931 near the Sidhwalia Railway Station of the North-Eastern Railway. The managing agents are Messrs. Cotton Agents, Ltd., of Calcutta. Its crushing capacity is 650 tons per day and is fitted with double sulphitation system of production. During crushing season the factory employs 600 workers per day. The total capital invested in 1956-57 amounted to Rs. 3.75,000 and Rs. 2,76,000 were paid as wages. The total production in 1956-57 was 8,533.09 tons, valued at Rs. 93,24,461 It maintains a hospital and a middle school for the welfare of the labourers.

The Vishnu Sugar Mills, Ltd., Harkhua.—It is situated near Harkhua Railway Station on the North-Eastern Railway. Its managing agents are Messrs. Bilasrai Banarsilal and Company of Bombay. Its daily crushing capacity is 800 tons and is fitted with double sulphitation system of production. It crushed 24 lakh maunds of sugarcane in 1952-53 with 10 per cent recovery of sugar, and it produced 2.40,000 maunds of sugar. The factory has 1,150 workers on its roll.

Cawnpur Sugar Works, Ltd., Marhowrah.—The factory is situated near Marhowrah Railway Station of the North-Eastern Railway. Its managing agents are Messrs. Begg Sutherland and

Company, Ltd. Its daily crushing capacity is 939 tons and is fitted with double carbonation system of production. It is the oldest modern sugar factory of the district as it was started in 1904. In 1952-53 it crushed about 30 lakh maunds of sugarcane with 10 per cent recovery and produced 3 lakh maunds of sugar. The molasses produced was 3.3 per cent which was consumed in its distillery situated alongside the sugar factory. It employs about 1,500 labourers both on permanent and seasonal basis. It maintains a hospital for the welfare of the workers and gives some subsidy to the local high school where the children of the workers receive education.

ENGINEERING.

Saran Engineering Company, Ltd.—The registered name of this firm is Begg Sutherland Company, Cawnpore. Its workshop is located at Marhowrah which was established in 1921. It manufactures machine parts and rollers required in the sugar mills. Within a short time it has captured a good market. It supplies 300 rollers per year. It is equipped with up-to-date machineries and furnaces and carries on works on modern lines. The total number of workers engaged in this factory was 1,424 in 1957. The annual wages bill of the workers came to over Rs. 8 lakhs in 1957.

The value of total production in 1957 amounted to Rs. 31 lakhs. The process of manufacture includes castings, ferrous and non-ferrous in foundry, turning and finishing in machine shop and structural works in plate shop. The firm gets supplies of iron and steel from the stockists at Calcutta and Jamshedpur and coal from the collieries of West Bengal. In this factory both fixed and working capital amounts to about Rs. 70 lakhs.

CONFECTIONERY.

C. C. E. Morton (India), Ltd.—The firm is located at Marhowrah and was established in 1929. It has earned a reputation for the manufacture of sweets and confectionery. The total capital invested comes to about Rs. 30 lakhs and in 1957 it gave employment to 130 labourers per day as against 150 in 1951. It uses both imported and indigenous materials. It consumes about 200 bags of sugar and 150 tons coal per month. The factory is fitted with modern machines and equipments required for an integrated confectionery factory. The value of goods produced in 1957 amounted to Rs. 30 lakhs. However, the production was far short of its actual capacity. It is also facing shortage of raw materials and packing materials on account of trade restrictions. It has captured a good market and Morton's sweets are popular.

DISTILLERIES.

There are three distilleries in the district. The Marhowrah Distillery Firm belongs to Messrs. Begg Sutherland and Company, Private, Ltd. It was established in 1909. The total capital invested

exceeds Rs. 6 lakhs. It receives raw material (molasses) from its parent sugar factory, Marhowrah. The total production in 1957 came to 3,84,550.5 L. P. gallons and the total number of labourers employed was only 78.

The other distillery is at Pachrukhi. It is the side-industry of the Bihar Sugar Works, Pachrukhi, and was started in 1950. It gets raw material (molasses) from the sugar factory. Its production capacity is 1,560 L. P. gallons per day and employed daily 21 labourers.

The third distillery is at Mirganj. The average number of workers employed at Mirganj Distillery comes to about 110.

MEDIUM-SCALE INDUSTRIES.

The main medium-scale industry of the district is the engineering industry. The following are the important concerns :—

The Bihar Industrial and Engineering Company, Chapra.—It is located near the Chapra Railway Station of the North-Eastern Railway. It was established in 1947. The capital investment of this industry is about 3 lakhs of rupees. It is engaged in steel processing, moulding smithy and engineering works. The average production of the factory is about 150 tons annually. The factory gets raw materials from Government on quota basis. The finished goods consist of coach and wagons, nut and bolts, hume pipe and small vessels. The firm employed 37 persons in 1957 and paid Rs 25,000 as wages.

Jain Engineering and Company.—The concern is located at Katra Bazar of Chapra. It manufactures buckets, agricultural implements and domestic utensils. The capital investment of this firm is about Rs. 50,000. Its annual production of buckets is 1,000 dozens and consumes about 60 tons of raw materials. The finished goods are mostly sold locally and in the neighbouring districts of the State.

Hind Engineering and Company.—This is a small concern at Katra Bazar of Chapra and manufactures boxes, agricultural implements and domestic utensils. The capital investment of this concern is Rs. 25,000. It employs, on an average, 12 workers per day The finished goods are sold locally and in the neighbouring districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Krishna Chaturbhuj Works, Chapra.—It manufactures only domestic utensils and agricultural implements. The manufactured goods are sold in the local markets.

Vishwakarma Agricultural Implements Works.—Located at Sasamusa, it came into existence in March, 1954. It is run by an individual proprietor. It has a capital outlay of nearly Rs. 80,000 and employs 20 to 30 persons daily. It manufactures agricultural

implements with the help of human power. It has gathered wide reputation in the field of agricultural implements.

Soap Industry.

Soap-making industry is another important medium-scale industry of the district. The first soap manufacturing factory was started in the district in 1929. Washing soap only is made and that too on the semi-boiled process. The soap industry is facing a depression owing to the shortage of raw material and importation. The following soap factories are running in the district:—(1) Dharmanath Soap and Oil Mill, Shahebganj, Chapra, (2) Jagannath Soap Factory, Chapra, (3) Bishwanath Soap Factory, Chapra, (4) Lachmi Soap Factory, Chapra, (5) Janata Soap Factory, Chapra, (6) Dudhnath Soap Factory, Siwan, and (7) Omprakash Soap Factory, Maharajganj. These are small concerns with a small capital only and about 75 maunds of soap are manufactured daily.

Cold Storage and Ice-cream.

There are three cold storages in the district. Saran Cold Storage and the North India Cold Storage are located at Chapra. Another Cold Storage is located at Mirganj. Their capital outlay is about two lakhs of rupees each and they store potatoes and fruits. The capacity of each storage is about 2,500 maunds only. Mostly they keep products of the agriculturists and charge Rs. 7½ per maund per season. The potatoes are mainly stored for the purpose of seed.

There are ten small ice-cream concerns in the district. Every concern maintains a few skilled labourers and the produce is sold on commission basis to the sellers.

Small-scale Industries.

Food-processing Industry.

Rice, Oil, Dal and Flour Mills.—There are 10 oil mills in the district (1956-57). The number of castor oil pressing mill is 19, out of which 15 are at Chapra, 2 at Maharajganj, and the other 2 at Jamsbazar. There are 148 flour mills, 67 in the Sadar subdivision, 69 in Siwan subdivision and 12 in Gopalganj subdivision. Saran is a deficit area, so far as rice is concerned, and as such the smooth working of the rice mills frequently suffer a great deal for want of raw materials (paddy). So the number of rice mills is very small. Administrative controls on the supply and consumption of foodgrains were enforced after the Second World War. There was a Monopoly Procurement Scheme of Government, under which Government used to procure paddy and make over the paddy to the mills for husking in lieu of which these mills got milling charges only. Later on some mills were permitted to purchase paddy on behalf of the Government and were asked to supply the polished rice to Government at the controlled rate. But due to scarcity it was difficult to

procure paddy at the rate fixed by Government and the result was that almost all the mills were closed for some time. After the lifting of control they began to work satisfactorily, but owing to scarcity caused by drought for the last two consecutive years the mills have suffered a lot.

As regards oil mills, it should be mentioned here that in the latter part of the nineteenth century Saran held an important position in Eastern India so far as oil-seeds were concerned. Even now the oil industry holds an important position in the district. The extraction of oil is carried on by mills and by indigenous *kolhus*, oil-pressing contraptions worked by bullock power or hand-process.

To meet the supply of the oil-seeds to the mills, import has to be made from Uttar Pradesh. The names and locations of the different larger oil mills are as follows :—(1) Bihar Ginning Factory and Oil Mills, Siwan, (2) Harishankar Mills, Chapra, (3) Talkher Sah Bijadhar Ram, Ekma, (4) Dharamnath Soap and Oil Mills, Chapra, (5) National Engineering & Company, Siwan, (6) Sahi Technologists and Oil Mills, Maharajganj, (7) Raghubir Ram and Kedar Ram, Maharajganj, (8) Gupta Oil Mills, Chapra, and (9) R. N. Gupta Flour and Oil Mills, Chapra. The Harishankar Mill is a castor mill producer and exports oil to Calcutta. The total number of employees in all these factories in 1951 was 291.

Biscuit factory.—There are nine small biscuit factories in the district. The capital investment of each factory is not more than 1,500 rupees. Mostly they are run and managed by the proprietors themselves with the assistance of two or three labourers. The produce is sold locally. The output is of poor standard.

Biri-making industry.—There were only eight establishments and the total number of persons employed in them were 32 in the census of 1951. Both tobacco and leaves have to be imported and hence this is not a lucrative industry.

Cottage Industries

Basket-making industry.—Basket-making is common to the entire district. But it is the Mirganj and Maharajganj areas where it is mostly done About a population of 6,000, mostly of *Kandu* and *Nuniya* castes, earn their livelihood for about seven months in a year by making baskets. But they are thrown out of employment for the rest of the five months The demand is seasonal. There is a good market for baskets at Patna City, Hajipur and Muzaffarpur for the packing of mango, *lichi* and cauliflower. The baskets are sent out by the river. After the season for the cauliflower, the river traffic becomes suspended. The transport freight of the railway and automobiles is much higher than the river trafic and practically no purchase is made for about five months when river traffic closes. This industry has great potentiality to flourish, provided the transport

difficulty is removed. New ideas could be given for making artistic baskets or other cane articles for other purposes.

Sabai grass rope-making.—*Sabai* grass rope-making industry is one of the most important cottage industries of the district. Some villages of the Chapra Muffasil thana of the Sadar subdivision have this industry. This industry is mainly run by the men and women of *Dhanuk* caste. It affords employment to a population of about 4,000. The finished products are exported to Patna, Arrah and Muzaffarpur. The main exporting centre is Maharajganj. Another kind of rope is made of a blend of *munj* grass and *kas* and this is done by men of *Mallah* caste. The chief centres of this industry are Jantola, Lohalota and Gandpur in Revelganj thana. The main markets for this rope are Ballia, Gorakhpur and Burhaj in Uttar Pradesh. This is a seasonal industry which lasts from December to March only. The *sabai* grass rope is superior to this sort of rope and while the former is sold for about Rs. 50 per maund the latter is sold only for Rs. 16.

Brass utensils manufacturing industry.—This cottage industry is localised at village Parsagarh of Ekma thana and in Siwan. Brass utensils are mainly manufactured by the *Kasera* and *Lohar* castes. Various cooking utensils are made. *Kaseras* and *Lohars* manufacture these articles from the second hand, broken or discarded materials. The quality of the finished goods is decidedly better and so they are readily sold. The main markets for these articles are Arrah, Chapra. Siwan, Raxaul, Hajipur, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga and Ballia. The manufacturers of these articles are economically so poor that they are unable to carry on their avocation unless they get supply of raw materials from the *mahajans* who pay them only wages, and have the larger share in the proceeds. In the process of casting the wastage is nearly three to four seers per maund. In one week two labourers can cast and finish articles weighing one maund provided their work is not hampered for want of raw materials. Another type of this industry is prevalent in Siwan where *Kaseras* and *Lohars* are engaged in manufacturing utensils of copper. This industry is also carried on through the supply of second hand raw materials. Copper is dearer. The copper utensils in a way encourage the wide-spread thefts of copper wires of telegraphs and telephones.

In respect of bell metal industry, the names of Brass and Bell Metal Co-operative Society, Parsagarh, and Brass and Bell Metal Co-operative Society, Guthani, are worth mentioning.

The brass work of Siwan has more than a local reputation, which it well deserves, as the materials and the workmanship are good. Clay moulds only are used and the methods of the braziers are primitively simple. They first prepare a clay mould, and after mixing the different metals until the required alloy has been obtained, pour the mixture in the mould. The brass, when cool, is beaten and polished. The materials are brass or *phul*, i.e., a

compound of copper and spelter and it is for its *phul* manufacture that Siwan is best known. Sometimes, to increase the brilliancy, silver is mixed with the copper and spelter, the mixture being called *sausatais*, i.e., 100 : 27; this is only made to order as its manufacture is difficult and it is expensive. A bell metal ware, called *bedha*, is also produced at Siwan from copper and zinc and is worked up into supports for *hookahs* and other ornamental articles. It takes a brilliant polish and is much in demand.

Pottery.—The best pottery in Saran is also made at Siwan from a peculiar kind of tenacious clay, called *kohrauti*, found close to the town. Much of the pottery turned out is of indigenous shape and decoration, although it has a much higher finish than is generally found in the ordinary pottery. The vessels are baked in earthen jars, so as not to come in contact with the flames and when so baked are black. They are then glazed with a mixture of Fuller's earth (*sajji mati*) and clay found at Khodaibagh in the Siwan subdivision and at Gawandari in the Gopalganj subdivision. The mixture is blended with ground mango bark and applied as a glaze. To complete the ornamentation, quicksilver in a powdered state is applied delicately with a needle to give a silvery colour and brass dust to give a golden colour, the surface being rubbed with a flat stone.

This fine pottery industry is now in a decadent stage due to lack of co-operation among the artisans themselves. The goods produced being bulky in nature, are faced with transport difficulty. The absence of any publicity and marketing organisation for these articles is a handicap. The village potters as such are now mainly engaged to work on the earthen jars and other earthen wares which have ready markets in the locality. If the potters are given new ideas for shape and execution and they are put on to better marketing facilities, there is a great scope for this industry.

Handloom weaving industry.—Handloom industry is one of the old industries of the district and is carried on by the weavers who are in majority among the Muslim community in the district. This industry is mainly localised in Siwan and Gopalganj. Mostly one weaver family has one loom and one or two reeds. Some of the weavers are also cultivators and work on looms when they are free from agricultural work. But there are families whose livelihood is solely dependent on their looms. They weave cloth and also stamp it. The yarn used by the weavers is purchased from the markets. Mostly *gamchas*, *chadar* and long cloth are manufactured which have ready markets in the district. This cottage industry affords sustenance to about 60,000 people, but is liable to vicissitudes as it has to compete with mill cloth.

There is one ginning factory at Siwan which was established during the latter part of the eighteenth century. In this factory raw cotton is converted into cotton for spinning. A large number

of widows and other female labourers earn their livelihood by ginning raw cotton on small sized tools, called *otas*. Recently the Bihar Branch of the *Khadi Bhandar* has made good progress in ginning, spinning and weaving. A large number of people are engaged in weaving *khadi* cloth at Mairwa, Mirganj, Kail, Siwan and Maharajganj *Khadi Bhandars*. There were about 3,000 handlooms in 1957 working in the district. A newer type of *charkha*, known as *Ambar Charkha*, has been introduced.

In Siwan a few families are engaged in printing cloth. The cloth which is often coarse is first dipped in a mixture of powdered myrabolan and water, and after being dried in the sun it attains a light *khaki* colour It is then stamped by hand with various figures, emblems of flowers, etc, in black or red with wooden seals or stamps imported from Mirjapore. After being washed, the stamped cloth is dipped in large iron or copper pans, containing some reddish colour mixed with water, which is heated over a fire for about two hours. This process serves to enhance the brilliancy and stability of the printed colours. The cloth, after being taken out of the pan, is again washed and is then ready for sale. It is used for making the quilts, called *razais*, and for *farash* or thin druggets and also for *saris*.

Another common form of printing of cloth consists of stamping coloured *saris* with silver or gold leaf ornamentation. The printer presses a gummed stamp on to the *sari* and then impresses on the gummed impressions a pad, to which gold or silver leaf, imported from Ballia or Patna, is attached. The leaf adheres to the gummed impression and a flower-like pattern is produced. This type of cloth is in great demand at weddings but the impression is effaced when the cloth is washed.

Cheap carpets, called *daris*, are manufactured near Siwan. The apparatus used are of the usual rough kind but the use of the fly shuttle has become more popular. Blankets are manufactured at Sasamusa. A good number of herdsmen, called *Gareris* or shepherds, are engaged in this avocation in the winter season.

Saltpetre industry.—Saltpetre, as mentioned before, was an old major industry of the district. Though the industry has lost all its previous grandeur still it gives sustenance to some of the people of the lower income group, known as *Nuniyas*. The village called Sarain in Baniapur thana is centre for the manufacture of saltpetre. There were 54 saltpetre refiners in the district in 1957-58. The average annual production of saltpetre is about 100 maunds. The refiners procure the crude saltpetre from the *Nuniyas* who are either engaged in it as an independent worker or on a contract basis. The refiners, after refining the crude saltpetre, dispose of their products to the Agents of some Calcutta Firms for further refining. In India it is consumed in the coalfields for the manufacture of gunpowder and in the tea gardens where it is used as fertilizers. In the glass factory it is applied for melting the glass. But the industry is getting

a set back due to a substitute which is used in the coalfields. As a fertiliser also it is losing market in the tea gardens.

Tikuli Industry.

This industry is carried on by members of a Backward Muslim Community, called *Bisati*. The majority of this community live at a village, called Harihansa, about six miles south of Siwan. *Tikuli* is manufactured from the broken glass which they either purchase or collect. The broken glass is melted in an oven called *bhatha*. In this industry both males and females have equal share. The manual work in melting the glass is done by the male members of the family but it is the women who give the final finish and design. The chief markets of *Tikuli* are Banaras, Patna and Calcutta. About 200 people are engaged in the industry The finished product, *Tikuli*, is used by the ladies on the forehead as an ornament.

Ghee Industry.

Ghee industry is an old indigenous industry of the district. This industry is carried on chiefly by the members of the *Goala* or *Ahir* caste. Probably every farmer of some means has a cow or buffalo for milk and *ghee*. Before the introduction of hydrogenated oil, *ghee* was the chief medium of cooking. Raw milk, especially of cow, is now in more demand than the *ghee*. The absence of pasturage has also affected the industry. The cost of rearing cattle has considerably gone up and people find it difficult to maintain cows and buffaloes. Although the price of *ghee* has considerably gone up in recent years, it has hardly provided any incentive to keep more milch cattle for milk and *ghee*. This industry is now on the wane. The use of vegetable oils as a cooking medium being much cheaper is rapidly spreading.

Khandsari or Gur Industry.

The *gur* industry is an old industry of Saran. Besides sugar industry, molasses are also prepared by the cultivators who grow the cane and press the juice, either with the old fashioned *kolhu*, a kind of pestle and mortar arrangement also used for pressing oil, or more commonly with iron roller mills worked by a bullock. Generally, the sugarcane not consumed by the sugar mills is utilised for the purpose of making *gur*. The manufacture of *gur* is more extensive in the Siwan subdivision. *Gur* is mostly consumed locally.

Leather Industry

Cattle hides are tanned by the local *Chamars* (tanner) by indigenous method. They dip the hide for a few hours in lime, take it out and after filling the same with small broken pieces of *banjhi* shrubs soaked in water, hang it like cloth. The leather is allowed to remain hanging till it assumes fawn colour when it is dried. The leather so tanned is not very soft and durable but is good enough for many purposes, particularly for rough shoe-making.

The number of tanners exclusively engaged in tanning is not large in Saran. According to the census of 1951, there were only 673 persons engaged in leather, leather products and foot-wear.

The name of Shoemakers' Society, Garkha, deserves a mention as a producer of shoes on a co-operative basis.

It may be mentioned here that a number of Training-*cum*-Production Centres have been started in different Blocks to impart improved technical training to traditional artisans. This is a new venture and has yet to become popular. It is hoped that such Centres will be able to bring about a considerable improvement in the skill of the artisans and help them to improve their economic condition.

Labour and Employers' Organisations.

In this district the unskilled labour is recruited from within the district. A good percentage of the skilled labour, however, comes from outside. Organised labour unions are seen only in the Sugar Mills. The names of the principal industrial establishments with the number of workers employed in 1958 are as follows :—

Name of the Industrial Establishment.	No. of workers employed.
(1) Cawnpore Sugar Works, Ltd., Marhowrah ..	1,403
(2) Saran Engineering Co., Ltd., Marhowrah .	685
(3) M/s. C & E. Morton (India), Ltd., Marhowrah	205
(4) Bharat Sugar Mills, Ltd., Sidhwalia ..	600 (approx.)
(5) Vishnu Sugar Mills, Ltd., Harkhua .	1,142
(6) S. K. G. Sugar Mills, Ltd., Mirganj ..	906
(7) New Savan Sugar Factory, Siwan ..	745
(8) Bihar Sugar Works, Ltd., Pachrukhi ..	1,361
(9) Sasamusa Sugar Works, Ltd., Sasamusa .	708
(10) S. K. G. Distillery, Mirganj	110

There are labour unions affiliated to the Indian National Trade Union Congress, All-India Trade Union Congress and Hind Mazdoor Sangh. The labour unions at Marhowrah, S. K. G. Sugar Mills, Mirganj, New Savan Sugar Factory, Vishnu Sugar Mills, Harkhua and Sasamusa Sugar Works are affiliated to the Indian National Trade Union Congress. The labour unions at Sidhwalia and Pachrukhi Sugar Mills are affiliated to the Hind Mazdoor Sangh. A second labour union at Sasamusa and Harkhua Sugar Mills are affiliated to the All-India Trade Union Congress. There is not much of affinity between the different labour unions and as a result the sugar industry labourers are somewhat divided among themselves.

Regarding the employers' organisation, some of the industrial concerns are affiliated to the Bihar Chamber of Commerce and the

Indian Sugar Mills' Association, Bihar Branch, with their headquarters at Patna. The Indian Sugar Mills' Association looks after the interest of the employers in the Sugar Mills. Usually when any matter of importance has to be decided at the State level the Indian Sugar Mills' Association is always consulted by the Labour Department.

Welfare of Industrial Labour.

The Labour Officer under the Commissioner of Labour, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna looks after labour welfare work in the different industrial establishments. Particular attention has to be paid to housing condition, recreational, educational and sanitation facilities for the workmen. The employers have to provide canteens, hospitals and dispensaries and other requirements under the Factories Act. Voluntary Labour Welfare Centres, receiving subsidy from the Labour Department, are located at Marhowrah, Pachrukhi and Mirganj.

The Government of Bihar in the Labour Department had started a 'B' type Labour Welfare Centre at Marhowrah in March, 1957. This Centre works under a Labour Welfare Officer assisted by a Lady Assistant Welfare Officer and other staff. The activities of the Centre cover recreation and instruction. The Labour Welfare Centre has its own building. It is getting popular and about 100 persons attend the Labour Welfare Centre per day.

The Industrial Disputes Act with its objectives of maintaining industrial peace by providing a machinery for settlement of individual and collective disputes between the management and their accredited labour unions has been fully utilised. A large number of individual disputes have been settled by conciliation under this Act. Enforcement of minimum wages in respect of *biri*-making, road construction, building operation and transport is implemented. With the enforcement of Bihar Shops and Establishments Act, 1953, within the municipal area of Chapra town from the 1st April 1957 the shopkeepers have an obligation to give certain facilities to their workers. Weekly Holidays Act has also been enforced to provide for a compulsory weekly rest to workers. A very beneficial Act, known as the Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1952, gives certain extra benefits to the Sugar Mill workers. This Act covers 38 industries, out of which sugar is one. The Act authorises the employer to deduct 6½ per cent of the basic wages and dearness allowance of an individual worker and pay the same amount from his end and a deposit is made in the State Bank of India. The individual worker can withdraw the money only when he retires or he is permanently incapacitated or found to suffer from particular diseases like cancer, leprosy or tuberculosis. All the Sugar Mill workers in Saran district have been brought within the purview of this Act.

The Sugar Mills have made provisions for educational, medical, etc., facilities which have been covered elsewhere.

It is understood that every year an average of Rs. 40,000 is distributed to the workers in each sugar factory in the shape of bonus.

Factories provide free quarters, free light, free fuel and free medical aid to its workers who reside in the factory colony. Under the Industrial Housing Scheme it is expected that more quarters will be constructed by each factory for the workers.

A REVIEW.

The discussions under the various sections in this Chapter will show that this district is essentially agricultural and there has been very little of industrialisation. It cannot be said that there is no industrial potentiality in the district. With the completion of the Gandak Project, a very large multi-purpose project, there will be some change in the present agricultural economy of the district. The Gandak Project is awaiting the final approval of the Nepal Government. Even without the implementation of a big scheme like the Gandak Project, there could still be a possible avenue of small industries in this district. There is no reason why there cannot be a number of assembling industries and the possibilities for manufacture of small mechanical parts of sugar mills, re-rolling mills, etc., cannot be ruled out. The chances of opening small industrial concerns for the manufacture of cycle parts, radio components and such other small industries which do not require a very large capital may have to be examined. As has been observed elsewhere, the agricultural economy of the district has almost reached a saturating point and it is necessary that there be an agro-industrial economy to utilise the untapped manpower.

According to the *District Census Hand-Book*, 1951, a population of 77,816 (60,290 males and 17,526 females) were engaged in various industries and services. The distribution is given in Economic Table no. B-III of the 1951 *District Census Hand-Book*. The statistics given below will show the number of economically active persons such as employers, employees and independent workers in various industries of the district :—

Classification of industries	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males	Females.	Males.	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Primary industries not elsewhere specified.	950	249	11	3	107	5	832	241
1. Stock raising ..	283	127	11	3	52	..	226	124

Classification of industries.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2. Rearing of small animals and insects.	29	..	..	..	3	..	26	..
3. Plantation industries.	70	5	..	..	45	..	25	5
4. Forestry and wood-cutting.	106	44	..	..	..	..	106	44
5. Hunting ..	19	..	.	..	..	..	19	..
6. Fishing ..	443	73	..	..	7	5	436	68
7. Mining and quarrying.	441	79	61	2	83	8	297	69
8. Coal-mining .	2	..	.	..	2	..	..	..
9. Iron-ore mining	12	..	..	..	12	..	..	..
10. Stone-quarrying, clay and sand pits.	330	45	61	2	64	..	205	43
11. Salt, saltpetre and saline substances.	97	34	..	..	5	8	92	26
II. Processing and manufacture—food-stuffs, textiles, leather and products thereof.	7,101	1,965	247	43	2,823	137	4,031	1,785
1. Food industries otherwise unclassified	318	36	.		14	.	304	36
2. Grains and pulses	236	210	7		71	5	158	205
3. Vegetable oil and dairy products.	643	427	..	2	7	7	636	418
4. Sugar Industries	1,567	184	..	..	1,348	26	219	158
5 Beverage .	395	16	9	.	22	.	364	16
6. Tobacco ..	482	69	8	2	121	15	353	52
7. Cotton textile ...	508	299	14	..	173	4	321	295
8. Wearing apparel (except foot-wears) and made-up textile goods.	1,339	435	82	28	186	20	1,071	387

Classification of industries.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9. Textile industries otherwise unclassified.	997	232	87	11	786	40	124	181
10. Leather, leather products and footwear.	616	57	40	..	95	20	481	37
III. Processing and manufacture — metals, chemicals and products thereof.	1,356	217	46	5	220	13	1,090	199
1. Manufacture of metal products otherwise unclassified.	1,119	148	22	1	74	3	1,023	144
2. Iron and Steel (basic manufacture).	55	5	10	3	32	2	13	..
3. Transport equipment.	125	46	14	..	79	6	32	40
4. Electrical machinery, apparels, appliances and supplies.	30	3	..	1	30	2	..	..
5. Manufacture of chemical products otherwise unclassified.	27	15	..	..	5	..	22	15
IV. Processing and manufacture not elsewhere specified.	3,369	1,425	35	11	455	52	2,879	1,362
1. Manufacturing industries otherwise unclassified.	1,085	213	15	4	222	10	848	199
2. Products of petroleum and coal.	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
3. Bricks, tiles and other structural clay products.	56	44	..	..	..	21	58	23
4. Cement, cement pipes and other cement products.	11	..	..	..	11	..	..	..

Classification of industries.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
5 Non metallic mineral products.	1,076	510	5	4	106	6	965	500
6. Wood and wood-products, other than furniture and fixtures.	1,044	649	10	3	96	10	938	636
7 Furniture and fixtures.	80	7	5	.	17	3	58	4
8. Paper and paper products.	1	2	..	..	1	2	.	..
V. Construction and utilities.	2,079	582	..	..	1,033	387	1,046	195
1. Construction and maintenance of works otherwise unclassified.	332	..	..	.	332	..	.	.
2. Construction and maintenance of buildings.	1,172	147	..	..	378	28	794	119
3. Construction and maintenance—roads, bridges and other transport works	184	4	..	.	70	4	114	..
4. Construction and maintenance operations—Irrigation and other agricultural works.	7	..	..	.	7		.	..
5. Works and services—Electric power and gas supply.	36	..	..	.	36	.	..	..
6. Works and services—Domestic and industrial water-supply.	43	105	..	..	25	105	18	..
7. Sanitary works and services (including scavengers).	305	326	.	.	185	250	120	76.

The district does not have any forest, mines, stone-quarries or a good pasturage. It is only natural to expect that the population dependent on mines and quarries or stock raising will be very small.

The statistics quoted above fully support this. But as this district has a number of rivers, the small population dependent on fishing requires some notice. It is apparent that a big percentage of the *Mallahs* who are by profession fishermen have taken to boating or other professions. It may be mentioned that there is not much of export in fish from this district and the little quantity of fish that is caught is hardly adequate for local demands.

The statistics will show that a small but sizeable population depends on processing and manufacture of food-stuff, textile, etc., and sugar industries. The statistics above make out a correct picture of the district which is extremely backward from the point of view of industrialisation and the ancillary trade and commerce. Without an expansion of Banking facilities, development of warehousing and marketing organisations, the primary and secondary markets cannot develop much and industries improved. Supply of rural credit is the basic condition for growth of industries, trade and commerce. The discussion in the next chapter will show how poor Banking facilities are at the moment in the district.

CHAPTER VI.

BANKING, TRADE AND COMMERCE.

Banking and Finance.

Not much is known regarding the early system of the indigenous banking in the district excepting that village *mahajans* appear to have been in existence from time immemorial In the days when there was more of communal life in the village and when the prosperity or adversity of one family meant more to other families, it could be well imagined that there was more of ready credit facilities within the village or within a zone of a number of villages. Credit taken could also be repaid by manual work, either for interest or for payment towards capital. The more prosperous agriculturist was also a sort of a bank for the poorer agriculturists or to the landless labourers. A bad manifestation of such credit facilities was the *kamiauti* system or the bonded labourer.

During the days of the foreign commercial *kothis*, credit facilities were available from the agents of the *kothis*. The *dadan* system, according to which an advance payment was made for the future crop, was quite common. The *kothis* were for a pretty long time. the friend, philosopher and guide of the agriculturists who would grow crops at their bidding. At one time some of the foreign *kothis* had the privilege of drawing money from the Government treasury and maintain an account. The money was distributed among the *raiyats* as an advance

The zamindars were the other source of credit facilities in the rural areas. The zamindars fully appreciated that much of their agricultural prosperity depended upon a well satisfied smaller agriculturists and labourers. They wanted a proper realisation of the rent and they wanted their extensive *bakast* lands to be cultivated. The condition of the zamindars in the early days was unenviable. They used to be farmers of the rent to be paid to the Company and for want of payment they used to be put in custody. They avoided such embarrassing circumstances by crediting the rentals of *raiyats* in advance and realised the rentals later. This was a peculiar type of indigenous banking. Many of the *sanads* and *firmans* of the landlords from the time of the Muslim rule refer to their social obligations. One of the social obligations was to find credit to the *raiyats* in times of need.

Another source of credit facilities is the State. From the very beginning of the British administration, the State has offered credit facilities to the agriculturists. No such facilities appear to have been offered by the State at that time to the industrialists, big merchants or traders. They used to have regular accounts in the *kothi* and the *kothi* in their turn had accounts with the treasury The agriculturists have always been given suitable loan for buying seeds, plough or cattle.

Famines and floods, which are unfortunately not uncommon in the district, was usually followed by wide-spread distribution of loans under various Acts. During famine period, apart from money facilities, seeds have also been offered. The State, apart from giving direct assistance in the shape of monetary loans, has also sponsored the Co-operative Banks for credit facilities in the rural area.

In a way it may be said that one of the basic reasons for the colossal rural indebtedness is an easy way of getting finance. At a time when the circulation of money was of a different type, the landless labourers, the small and big cultivators, the petty and big zamindars all could get loans from one source or other just for the asking. The result was a certain encouragement towards uneconomical living and growing accumulation of indebtedness. As a matter of fact, in certain family of zamindars indebtedness almost became a feature denoting prestige. In this connection it may be said that the annual Sonepur *mela* was a great clearing house for debts and credits. Big zamindars used to be ready at their camp at Sonepur *mela* for giving advances to the men and particularly to the sons and heirs of aristocratic zamindars for purchase of comforts and luxury.

There do not appear to have been many hereditary money-lenders. Certain big money-lenders of Patna City in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century had their clientele in Saran district. Banwari Lal Sah of Chapra who made large endowments for *sarai* and hospital was one of the noted bankers in the early nineteenth century.

The set up of the present indigenous banking system has not much changed so far as the professional money-lenders is concerned. The All-India Rural Credit Survey conducted by the Reserve Bank made some investigations in the district of Monghyr and the Research Department of the Reserve Bank published the monograph (1959). Although the data relate to 1951-52, they are of some value and the findings about Monghyr may be accepted to some extent for the district of Saran as well. In any case the survey shows important trends. It appears that the Co-operative Movement is inadequately developed and that the proportion of borrowing from it to the total borrowings and debts are negligible. The role of the State in the supply of credit was only slightly better. Forty-nine per cent of cultivating families resorted to the professional money-lenders who apparently supply 79 per cent of cultivator's total borrowings. In spite of the efforts of the State Government during the last few decades to strengthen the Co-operative Bank and to curb the vagary of the money-lenders by statutory Acts, the money-lender has flourished and is more popular to the creditors than either Co-operative or the State. This also indicates the magnitude of the problem that has to be faced by the State and the public for finding quick credit at cheaper rate and which will not set up a vicious circle. There

is no doubt that the uneven distribution of holdings discussed at several places has some relevance to the problem.

It has been calculated that in India the professional money-lenders, agriculturist money-lenders, relatives, traders and landlords supply about 93 per cent of the total amount borrowed for cultivation. According to this computation, the combined contribution of Government and co-operatives is about 6 per cent of the total indebtedness. The figures are as follows :—

Credit Agency.	Proportion of borrowing from each agency to the total borrowings of cultivation.
Government	3.3 per cent.
Co-operatives	3.1 per cent.
Relatives	14.2 per cent.
Agriculturist money-lenders	24.9 per cent.
Professional money-lenders . ..	44.8 per cent.
Traders and commission agents ..	5.6 per cent.
Landlords	1.5 per cent.
Commercial Banks	0.9 per cent.
Others	1 8 per cent.
	100.0 per cent.

The private money lender dominates the scene because he adapts himself to the needs of the borrower. He is always available to hand over the money so that some expenditure which brooks no delay may be met at once. He has to live in the same village or near his debtor. He has different kinds and degrees of hold on those to whom he chooses to lend. He will first apply social or economic forces involving loss of local prestige, before he will resort to litigation.

The data collected by the survey of the All-India Rural Credit reveal that borrowing from private agencies (other than Commercial Banks) bears a rate of interest of 25 per cent or more but is as high as 70 per cent in Orissa, 49 per cent in Tripura, 40 per cent in West Bengal, 29 per cent in U. P. and 27 per cent in Behar. It follows that money-lending legislation had little effect on what the cultivator is actually charged by the money-lender. The total number of village money-lenders interviewed by the survey party said that their financial operations made it necessary that they themselves should borrow. As many as 78 per cent mentioned are other money-lenders, some 6 per cent mentioned are indigenous bankers and 4 per cent referred to Commercial Banks as sources available to them for financing their transactions. The other money-lenders are presumed to be bigger money-lenders in the towns.

They are defined as money-lenders who accept deposits and deal in *hundis*. To a very small extent they lend direct to the agriculturists. They fall to the same category of urban money-lenders and form a part of the financing superstructure of private credit. The indigenous banker, like the Commercial Bank which in many parts of the country is replacing him as a financier of trade, is often a trader himself. Further he finances smaller money-lenders. That this mixed agency of trade and credit still serves a residual number of more or less useful purposes is true but what is not true is that the indigenous bankers thereby become entitled to be considered seriously as an appropriate instrument of rural credit. A claim of this sort has been made from time to time by association of indigenous bankers with a view to obtaining facilities of rediscount from the Reserve Bank of India. So far as rural credit is concerned, the All-India Rural Credit Survey Party viewed that there would be more danger than benefit to the cultivator if the indigenous banker is constituted.

The merit as well as the demerit of the private credit is that it is private. The size of the money-lender's participation in rural credit is undoubtedly large. Nevertheless, it is a mistake to imagine that the size is a measure of the place he must occupy in a realistic solution. Co-operation and banking are the only means by which the weaker rural producer can be protected from the shackles of powerful interest and helped to develop strength and prosperity.

There are four Joint Stock Banks and Loan and Investment Companies in this district. They are (1) State Bank of India, (2) Central Bank of India, Limited, (3) Punjab National Bank, Limited, (4) Bank of Bihar, Limited. The State Bank of India has a branch at Siwan and at Chapra and Pay Office at Gopalganj. The Central Bank of India has also two branches at Saran and Chapra. All the normal facilities to the constituents are offered by the banks.

The Siwan Central Co-operative Bank at Siwan has the following liabilities and assets for 1955—1957 :—

Siwan Central Co-operative Bank, Siwan (Bihar)
(24th February 1948).

Number of offices including Head Office—1.

[In thousands of rupees.]

———	1955-56.	1956-57.
Capital and Reserves	2,83	3,20
Deposits and loans held at the end of the year from	4,56	8,20
Cash in hand	21	18
Cash in Bank	78	70
Loans due by individuals and Banking Societies.	4,37	6,27

The number of Banking Institutions in this district is not adequate. The figures, however, have to be accepted against the background of the distribution of offices of Scheduled, Non-Scheduled and Co-operative Banks in Bihar. The corresponding figures for West Bengal are 1,98,17 and 96, respectively, while in the small State of Kerala they are 1,87,404 and 38, respectively. Banking habit has not yet fully developed. Dacoities and looting of cash and jewellery running to more than four figures from a household are not uncommon in this district. The following distribution of Banking Offices, including Foreign Banks and Co-operative Banks, with population in the several States in 1957 taken from the Statistical Tables relating to banks in India for the year 1957 (Reserve Bank of India, Bombay), will be of interest :—

DISTRIBUTION OF BANKING OFFICES INCLUDING FOREIGN BANKS AND CO-OPERATIVE BANKS, BY POPULATION IN SEVERAL STATES, 1957.

States.	10,00,000 and over.		5,00,000 to 10,00,000.		2,00,000 to 5,00,000.		1,00,000 to 2,00,000.		75,000 to 1,00,000.		50,000 to 75,000.		25,000 to 50,000.		10,000 to 25,000.		5,000 to 10,000.		Below 5,000.		Total of places.	No. of offices.
	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.	No. of places.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Andhra ..	..	..	1	27	1	14	5	44	4	26	6	28	13	49	59	105	19	25	6	6	123	333
Bihar ..	..	..	..	..	2	22	3	18	2	7	5	17	12	29	22	40	5	9	6	7	66	158
Uttar Pradesh	..	..	1	39	6	102	9	67	3	17	9	39	26	90	52	108	14	20	21	25	153	519
Kerala ..	..	..	.	..	..	.	4	103	..	..	5	108	10	54	61	184	48	99	32	53	186	629
Bombay ..	1	193	2	82	4	66	6	72	3	28	15	82	43	190	117	244	127	198	62	76	425	1,278
Punjab .	.	..	..	..	2	38	2	24	2	16	5	23	15	65	39	109	30	55	35	45	153	391
West Bengal	1	166	..	.	1	9	3	5	4	11	6	16	13	49	20	38	3	3	4	5	64	311
Madras ..	1	166	..	..	3	95	3	64	5	54	6	50	31	141	63	153	29	40	13	15	164	736

The banks in Saran district cannot be said to have contributed much of solution towards the very heavy rural indebtedness. The cultivators' need for credit arises from a number of causes. He may want short-term funds for current production, he may require a medium-term loan for purchase of livestock or he may have to borrow long term for digging an expensive well or making a substantial improvement to his land or he may have to borrow for family expenditure. Side by side the resources of the cultivator have to be considered. An assured but variable amount of cash is available to him only at certain times during the year when the crops are sold but his expenditures are spread all over the year. The bulk of the produce is sold for cash and the cultivator has to buy from the proceeds the commodities needed for family consumption. The cash resources of both the cultivators and non-cultivators are limited. All this partially explains why the banks are not so readily resorted to by the agriculturists. The large traders and businessmen of Saran district, however, patronise the banks.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

The principal imports are rice, paddy and other foodgrains from Shahabad, Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga and Bhagalpur, cotton piece goods, salt and kerosene oil from Calcutta and coal from the Jharia and Giridih coalfields. The exports are sugar, molasses, linseed, mustard seed, gram, pulses and other foodgrains. Saran is a deficient district for food production and depends on Champaran and Shahabad even in normal times. It has already been mentioned that money sent by the emigrants is considerable and helps to keep up the balance.

The grain trade is of particular importance. Even at the worst time when crops fail and prices rise the *banias* have merely to buy large stock of grains at a higher price and they know there will be an assured profit if they sell at the right time. The main trade routes of the district are the waterways, roadways and the railways. Saran has always been depending partially on her river-borne trade. The North-Eastern Railway intersperses the district and carries the bulk of the goods traffic. The inward and outward traffic of goods through the railways has been covered in the chapter on Communication. There are no proper statistics for the goods traffic carried through the roadways. The roadways have been developed only since 1948 and the number of carrier trucks is not very large. The traffic through roadways is not heavy.

TRADE CENTRES.

The principal trade centres are Chapra, Revelganj, Siwan, Maharajganj, Mairwa, Mirganj, and Gopalganj. These trade centres are connected both by railways and roads. Sonepur, Dighwara and Ekma are also important trade centres where a large quantity of grains are stored and distributed. Apart from these trade centres and

entrepots, there are smaller trade centres scattered all over the district. Trade through the riverways is not in consideration.

Large scale wholesale business in grains and other commodities is carried on from Chapra, Maharajganj, Mirganj and Siwan. The grain *mandi* of Chapra has about 40 wholesale dealers and the daily turnover in grains may be said to be of near about Rs. 25,000. There are also a number of wholesale dealers of cloth. The daily turnover of grains is probably bigger in Maharajganj than in Chapra. The other goods dealt with at Maharajganj are sunn-hemp, jute, molasses, onion, potato, turmeric, ginger and other spices. A large number of looms are also in operation in and around Maharajganj. Mirganj grain market for wholesale business is well organised. Several Patna merchants have agents at Mirganj, specially for pulses, linseed and sugar. Sugar is exported from Mirganj to Assam, West Bengal and the districts of South Bihar. The sugar market is due to S. K. G. Sugar Mill at Mirganj. Siwan has a good wholesale business of grain and some trade of pottery and brass work.

The retail marketing centres are scattered all over the district. Some of them are Dighwara, Sonepur, Ekma, Marhowrah and Revelganj in the Sadar subdivision; Mairwa, Guthani and Darauli in Siwan subdivision; and Gopalganj, Dighwa Dubauli and Hathua in Gopalganj subdivision. These markets are connected by the North-Eastern Railway as well as by metalled roads.

The number of village markets and *hats* are very large. Almost every village of Saran has one or two shops for the principal commodities. The village *bania* or *sahukar* has his connection with the nearest markets. He buys commodities from the nearest market at reasonable price and stocks for some time. Proper storage facilities, however, do not exist at the village markets. It is only the wholesalers who have got some sort of storage arrangement. There could be a vast improvement in trade and commerce, particularly for the agricultural produce, if there could be a village market within a daily bullock-cart's distance from the villages with some sort of storage facilities. Some of the important village markets are Basantpur, Bhagwanpur, Chhitaeli, Nabiganj, Baniapur, Barharia, Baikunthpur, Barauli, Pachrukhi, Hussainpur, Gopalpur, Hussainganj, Parsa, Shyampur, Siswan, Andar, Chainpur, Bishunpura and Sitalpur.

The large number of annual fairs and *melas*, whether due to religious tradition or economic reasons, have still a very great hold on the volume of trade and commerce within the district. Although most of the consumer goods are now available at any town or township, the *melas* and fairs have not lost their hold. To the villagers and particularly to the women in the villages, the *melas* have a strange fascination. With the provision for amusement and recreation, like circus parties, itinerant cinema, *nautankis*, dramas, agricultural

exhibition, etc., the *melas* show no sign for a decline. For the sale of cattle and agricultural goods the *melas* are particularly important. The cattle fairs have been dealt with under the chapter on Agriculture and Irrigation.

Weights and Measures.

The Bihar Weights Act, 1947, came into force in Saran district in December, 1951. There are two Subdivisional Inspectors of Weights and Measures, one at Chapra and the other at Gopalganj. Their duty is to verify the weights and weighing instruments used for trade purposes. They have to visit the markets and *hats* and seize unauthorised weights and scales.

There were three systems of weights in Saran district, e.g., a seer of 40 tolas, 48 tolas and 50 tolas in different parts. Forty tolas were in vogue in Chapra town, Sadar moffusil, Marhowrah, Mashrak, Sonepur, Dighwara, Maharajganj, Mairwa, Ander, Siswan, Barharia and Mirganj. Forty-eight tolas were in vogue at Baniapur, Palezaghat, Gorea Kothi, Bhore and Kateya. Fifty tolas were in vogue at Parsa, Doranda, Darauli and Guthani. The system of weights, known as *kachcha* seer, has all been superseded by the standard weight of 80 tolas in a seer.

The old system of Bullion weights were called as *bhari*, divided into annas, pices, *rattis* and *lal*. Sixteen annas equivalent to the weights of one rupee of silver coin was known as one *bhari*, one anna equivalent to four pice, one pice equivalent to four *rattis* and one *ratti* equivalent to two *lals*. These *rattis* and *lals* were seeds of a kind of bean. Standard weight scales were not in use but hand scales locally manufactured. With the enforcement of Bihar Weights Act, 1947, all these systems were changed into standard ones.

The weighbridges of the Sugar Factories are also verified and stamped before the start of cane-crushing season.

Occasional prosecutions are launched for breaches of the Act. It may, however, be mentioned that the weighing machines of the railway authorities are not verified. It is claimed by the railway authorities that as they work under Central Administration they do not come within the purview of the State Act.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMUNICATION.

Old Time Trade Routes and Modes of Conveyance.

The district of Saran because of its geographical position in North Bihar was considered important so far as trade is concerned in the pre-British days. On one side Saran is contiguous to some of the districts of Uttar Pradesh and on the other side she is on the border of Nepal. Saran was practically the gate-way of North Bihar from the northern side and there were recognised trade routes by road and water between Saran and the other districts of North Bihar and Patna in South Bihar. But these trade routes were very much interfered with by the incidence of crime in the last phase of the Mughal administration. The district along with the other districts of North Bihar had a number of petty zamindars who were almost like ruling chiefs and they used not only to control trade and commerce but would often interfere with the natural flow of trade. It was even considered an act of right to seize the merchandise goods unless some money was paid. The available records prior to the advent of the British show that there was a wave of lawlessness and the roads were neglected. As a matter of fact the neglect of the roads led to a certain extent to the development of water-borne traffic. *Bojras* (big boats) laden with merchandise used to go down from Uttar Pradesh, and pass Saran district for Patna or other places of commercial importance down below. There were quite a number of important calling stations for these boats which connected and developed the trade centres. Prior to the advent of the British administration it was a common sight to find hordes of freebooters passing by the trade routes of Saran and to the other districts of Bihar. The army of the Delhi Emperor used to pass by the roads of Saran quite often on their way to Gauda in Bengal either to take revenge on some recalcitrant frontier Governors or to realise a defaulting tribute. Sometime or other, some sections of the Muslim population in Saran and the other districts of North Bihar had attained a high level of culture. It is on record that even Muslim saints from Arabia used to be attracted to Saran and the other districts of North Bihar. It is a significant fact that there are patches of Muslim population culturally quite advanced not only in portions of Siwan in Saran district but also in the other districts of North Bihar. The belt of Muslim population on the border of Nepal Frontier is a remarkable feature and ultimately the belt fans out in Kishunganj subdivision in Purnea which is now on the borders of East Pakistan. Though undeveloped, the transdistrict routes of North Bihar, a considerable portion of which ran through Saran district, kept up the flow of culture and trade in pre-British days.

There was another reason why the roads of Saran used to attract a considerable volume of trade and commerce. The *mela* at *Harihar*

Kshetra (Sonepur) on the banks of the Gandak and Ganga has been running from old times. This *mela* is considered as the second largest cattle fair in the world. Horses were in great demand during the time of the later Mughal and the possession of a good horse was considered to be a sign of prestige and power. There are records to show that Arab horses, *dumba* sheep, camels, etc., used to be regularly brought for sale at *Harihar Kshetra mela*. Merchants from far flung Tatari and Persia used to bring their animals, carpets, musk and other luxury goods to the *mela* for sale.

The early British administrators were traders first and administrators next. They carried on an extensive trade in saltpetre, opium, indigo, textiles, etc. They quickly saw that the routes must be improved if they have to carry on a successful commerce. The development of the roads was taken into hand. Europeans were licensed and settled in the interior of the district for business purposes. They raised their concerns, commonly known as *kothis* and these *kothis* were connected with each other by roads and with the factories which were scattered in Saran district. But the development of the roads did not mean any decline of water-borne trade. The main factories were situated in Patna and Patna was accessible from Saran by boats only. There are still remnants of old Dutch and English *kothis* in the interior of the Saran district. One such remnant could be seen at Karinga village on the Baniapur road to the north-west of Chapra at a distance of 8 miles containing a mausoleum erected to the memory of Jacobus Van Horn, the Dutch Chief in Bihar, who died in 1712 soon after the Dutch had abandoned Patna and withdrawn to Singhia in consequence of the exactions of Farrukhsiyar.

The Dutch had a refinery for curing of saltpetre at Chapra. The English did the refining at Singhia and at other places and the cured saltpetre used to be carried by 'saltpetre boats' to Patna. The 'saltpetre boats" were above 50 yards long, 5 yards broad and 2½ yards deep and could carry 200 tons. The establishment of the Patna Factory gave a great encouragement to boat-traffic of commercial goods.

Before the proper development of the roads water-communication was very important. The river route made Patna one of the important marts for saltpetre and other commodities and the place of contact between the merchants of Eastern and Western India. It has been rightly observed that if Calcutta was the south-eastern gate for foreign trade, Patna was the north-western gate for up-country trade. 'The Patna fleet', as the saltpetre boats were also called, formed a great feature in the economic and political life of Bengal which comprised Bihar as well in the early eighteenth century.

The usual mode of conveyance besides boats were bullock-carts and head load or shoulders involving a great waste of man power.

Light-wheeled bullock-carts were common. Rubber-tyred bullock-carts came into vogue very much later. Pack horses and donkeys were also common. Elephants had always been in demand in rainy season. It may be mentioned here that Sonepur fair always has a big turnover of elephants. Zamindars had always been fond of elephants along with horses. As a matter of fact elephants are more useful in Saran district many portions of which used to get flooded and are still flooded.

People employed in Transport.

In recent decades like the other districts of North Bihar, Saran has tried to keep pace with development in transport and communications. Vast improvements have been made in transport by roads, railways and water, and in communications by post, telegraph and telephone. The communications by air and wireless do exist in the district but to a limited scale. The following are the figures of population according to the *Saran District Census Hand-Book* engaged in transport and communications during the year 1951 :–

Category.	No. of persons engaged. Males	Females.	Total.
Transport by road ..	1,110	387	1,497
Transport by water ..	422	..	422
Transport by air ..	5	..	5
Railway transport ..	1,451	..	1,451
Postal services ..	315	..	315
Telegraph services ..	26	..	26
Telephone services ..	13	..	13
Wireless services ..	8	..	8
Total ..	3,350	387	3,737

Development of Communication.

From the end of the eighteenth century to the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the British administrators in Saran gave top priority to the construction of roads and the other services of the public utility. The means of communication when the British stepped into the administration were very unsatisfactory. Communication received a good deal of attention because bad communication prevented transhipment of goods and the quick movement of troops so essential in the early part of the British administration. In the old correspondence volumes kept in the District Record Room at Chapra, there are several letters which mention that some roads were

constructed with the labour of the convicts. Regarding the development of communication the old *District Gazetteer of Saran* published in 1930 mentions as follows :—

" Bounded as it is on three sides by great rivers, Saran, till within a comparatively recent period, occupied a position of isolation ill befitting its great resources, its teeming population and its agricultural wealth, while its means of internal communication were little less backward. There were no canals and no railways; the existing roads were not nearly sufficient in number for the wants of the people; and the utility of those which did exist was much impaired by the fact that many of them were unbridged. In earlier times these defects were still more pronounced. In 1794 there were only three roads in the district, and in very bad condition. These were the roads from Chapra to Champaran *via* Mashrak and Sattarghat, which was hardly passable in the rains, people being obliged to wade up to the waist in water at several parts; that from Chapra to Muzaffarpur *via* Rewa Ghat which was scarcely passable; and that from Chirand to Manjhi *via* Godna which was also impassable in many places owing to the want of bridges. In 1800 the Collector reported that this last road was the only one in the district; it was repaired partly by the zamindars and partly by convict labour, and as he said ' well calculated for every description of carriage '. Bridges, however, were still practically non-existent, for in 1815 the Collector wrote that he knew of only one bridge worthy of notice in the district, at Barauli on the Daha.

" In 1830 the following main roads were in existence : (1) Chapra to Darauli; (2) Chapra to Salimpur Ghat and Gobindganj; (3) Chapra to Sattar Ghat; (4) Chapra to Rewa Ghat; (5) Chapra to Sonepur; (6) Chapra to Sherpur Ghat, the direct route to Dinapore: and (7) Chapra to Gorakhpur *via* Siwan and Baragaon. These roads were, the Collector reported, to be considered more in the light of military roads and were 'all good'. This description, however, appears to have somewhat euphemistic in the light of the following account of the roads of Saran given in the *Bengal and Agra Gazetteer* of 1841. Good roads are much wanted in the district; those in the vicinity of the station of Chapra are kept in repair by the Magistrate and those in the interior by the zamindars, whose system is attended altogether with very bad consequences. The great road from Chapra to Gorakhpur *via* Darauli is wretchedly bad; that leading to Gorakhpur *via* Baragaon is not much better, and in many places so narrow as scarcely to admit wheeled-carriages, besides having deep ditches on each road side. On the road several bridges are much required, more particularly across the nullah at Siwan, Aliganj, where a ferry boat plies in the rains, and many accidents occur; these remarks also apply to the Gobindganj and Bettiah roads. From Chapra to the eastward as far as Sonepur, a distance of about 30 miles, the roads are in excellent repair, and passable for wheeled-carriages

nearly the whole year. The Chirand and Sherpur Ghat on the Ganges, the direct route to Patna and Dinapore, have good roads. The road leading to Rewa Ghat on the Gandak, which is the road of Tirhoot, is of considerable importance, and very little expense would keep in good repair throughout the year. The road leading to Sattar Ghat on the Gandak, which is the high road to Champaran, is hardly passable in many places for five or six months in the year. The cross roads from one village to another are in a few instances repaired by the zamindars and if the high roads are indifferent in many parts of Saran, the cross roads are wholly neglected.

"The famine of 1874 gave a great stimulus to road making and numerous new roads were constructed, while existing highways were raised and improved. Still in 1877, when the *Statistical Account of Bengal* was published, it was stated that, with the exception of some short detached lengths in the vicinity of towns, all the roads were unmetalled and their chief defect was a want of bridges, many having been swept away in the flood of 1871. The introduction of the Road Cess Act in 1875 placed the District Road Fund on a satisfactory basis and enabled the bridges to be built and repaired, besides a finish being given to much rough earthwork which remained after the famine year and in 1884 the Bengal and North-Western Railway was opened throughout the south-western portion of the district. Since that time there has been steady progress in extending and improving the roads, building bridges, replacing old wooden bridges with masonry erections, and providing more waterway and better drainage. The length of the district roads has been increased to 1,205 miles and of village roads to 1,419 miles or approximately one lineal mile of road to every superficial square mile. The district also contains altogether 158 miles of railway, for besides the main line of the Bengal and North-Western Railway there are branch lines from Chapra to Mashrakh, Chapra to Manjhi, from Daraundha to Maharajganj, and from Siwan to Gorakhpur *via* a loop line as well as a loop line from Sonepur to Banwar Chak. There are now few places which are not easily accessible at all times of the year, and the result has been only not to develop trade but also to minimize the liability of Saran to famine."

After the formation of the District Board, roads became the responsibilities of the Board. The Public Works Department of the Provincial Government did not extend their activities to the roads but confined to the buildings only. The District Board with the available funds could not possibly do much to extend the roads to the interior. Proper road building materials were not easily available within the district. The European indigo planters, however, contributed considerably to the maintenance of good roads connecting their factories and the nearest market. The occasional social meets of the European planters were also an incentive to make roads. As there was one indigo factory in every 15 to 20 miles there were

a number of fairly kept roads within the district. The European planters had a tremendous pull on the District Board and some of them were members of the Board. The important *ghats* and ferries continued to receive attention either from the Board or from the Government. Some of the *ghats* were under the zamindars or other individual owners. When taken over by the Government, they used to be leased out. The embankments were also another important aid to communications.

The road building projects are now mainly done by three agencies—Public Works Department, District Board and Local Boards. The total length of the Public Works Department roads is 176.50 miles; the mileage of the District Board roads is 967.36 and village roads 1,956.52 on the 31st December 1957. The district has altogether 195 miles under the railway communication.

ROADS.

Regarding roads the old *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1930) mentions that "The roads of Saran may be divided into two categories, either according to their construction, as metalled or unmetalled, or according to their importance, as main or village roads Of metalled roads the district has comparatively few, their aggregate length being only about 234 miles. The macadamizing material used on them is nodular limestone (*kankar*), which is found in many places in the district. The small lump of *kankar* are carefully packed so as to form a level surface; water is then poured over it, and the surface rolled or beaten down with rammers. When properly consolidated, it forms an excellent metalling. The great cost of keeping these roads in a state of efficiency, under the heavy traffic which they have to carry, and the large number of unmetalled roads which demand maintenance and repair, have let the District Board of Saran for sometime past to abandon further efforts to extend their metalled system and to devote all available funds to improving existing unmetalled communications especially in extending, widening, raising and bridging them. The cart traffic of the district is very great. though it has somewhat diminished since the railway has been opened and all efforts directed to the improvement of the unmetalled roads are a direct benefit to the poor classes. The best kind of unmetalled roads consists of a raised road in the centre for light wheeled traffic, horsemen and pedestrians, with a grass berm on each side; outside these, on one or both sides is a cart track for heavy wheeled vehicles, and beyond these again the borrow pits, whence earth is taken for the repairs of the road. It is a distinct custom of long standing that heavy wheeled traffic should be confined to the lower cart tracks so long as they are passable; and owing to the great volume of traffic, the friability of the soil, and the immense length of roads to be kept in repair, any other system would severely strain the resources of the District Board. The increase, in recent

years, of motor traffic over roads not suitable for it, has prov[illegible] new problem which still awaits a satisfactory solution.

"Turning to the classification according to importance it [illegible] be explained that all the principal roads of the district entered [illegible] a carefully prepared list and known as district roads, are under the direct control of the District Board, whilst smaller roads including the tracks from village to village are subject to the administration of the Local Boards in the three subdivisions. The total length of district roads in existence in 1928-29 was 1,150 miles and of village roads 1,772 miles. The upkeep of all the main roads and all original construction work on village roads requiring engineering knowledge are in the hands of the District Engineer, who is assisted by a Supervisor, and the district is sub-divided into twelve sections each in charge of a sub-overseer who looks after both District and Local Board roads. Repairs are usually carried out by contractors Most of the main roads near the principal towns and villages are already shaded with fine trees, and plantation of others is steadily progressing.* Road demarcation has also been actively taken up, as it has been found that, unless this is thoroughly done, encroachments are frequent which are detrimental to the interests of the public. The operation is effected either by erecting boundary pillars or stones, or by palm trees, the latter method is especially suitable as it is inexpensive and lasting and the trees neither overshadow the neighbouring fields nor are damaged by cattle; where the road passes through villages and *bazars,* its limits are defined by masonry drains on either side."

It is important to mention that the district of Saran was not very badly affected so far as the communications are concerned by the great Bihar Earthquake of 1934. Communications, although damaged, played an important part in restoring normal conditions, as quite a large number of villages had been badly affected by fissures and sand of various types and textures. Some such villages were Tatwa, Devapur, Phajulpur, Rajaputty, Sahbazpur, Satjora, Basatpur, Kakri, Hathwa and Mashrakh. The only building severely affected at Sonepur was the dak bungalow, a lofty, one-storeyed, old building.

Before 1946 the Public Works Department had no activities so far as the roads were concerned. The Executive Engineer of the Public Works Department, Saran, is in charge of the roads and buildings of the district. There are three Assistant Engineers, besides sectional officers who work under him. The District Board has its own District Engineer for the maintenance and construction of the roads. There are two Assistant Engineers of the District Board each in charge of a road subdivision. The Assistant Engineer, Sadar, is

* Road arboriculture was rather neglected in the recent years and many of the old trees have died out (P. C. R C.).

in charge of the roads falling in Parsa (Chapra ...
sections with headquarters at Chapra. The ...
is in charge of the roads falling in ...
Darauli and Bhorey sections. Each ...
charge of a sectional officer. The ...
increased from 234 miles in 1952 to ...
176.50 miles are under the Public Works ...
miles under the District Board

VILLAGE ROADS

The village roads are katcha roads and maintained by the three Local Boards of the district. The total length of the village roads is 1,956.12 miles. The newly-constituted Gram Panchayats are also taking part in the road-building activities. The total mileage of the newly-constructed and the old repaired roads is 157½ and 477½, respectively. Regarding the village roads the old District Gazetteer mentions that " They form a perfect reticulation between the main arterial highways, and range from the well-planned road, hardly differing except in name from the main road to the winding tract from village to village which the cattle first made, then the villagers widened, and an energetic Magistrate at last decided to maintain. With so many excellent routes piercing the district in all directions, there were few points on the railway, which were not already served by existing roads when it was opened. A few stations, however, remained, which though admirably placed as regards the traffic to be carried and the convenience of passengers, were not provided with satisfactory means of communication with the interior of the district. For these places several new roads have already been constructed, others are being constructed, and it is the policy of the District Board, as opportunity offers, to provide every station with good metalled approach ".

DISTRICT BOARD ROADS.

As mentioned before the total length of the roads under the District Board, Saran, is 967.36 miles, out of which 144.32 miles are metalled and 823.04 miles unmetalled. The total length of the village roads is 1,956.12 miles. Some of the important roads of the district have been described below :—

Mairwa-Guthni road.—It is a major district road and its total length is 9½ miles. There is a plan to build a bridge at Guthni on this road by the Public Works Department and if constructed, it will form a link with the Deoria district of Uttar Pradesh.

Chapra-Salimpur Ghat road.—Its total length is 51 miles, which leads due north from Chapra to the important ferry of Salimpur on the Gandak opposite Gobindganj, through which most of the traffic from Nepal and Champaran passes into Saran and Gorakhpur.

Chapra-Guthni road.—The Chapra-Guthni road, 54 miles, skirts the left bank of the river Gogra, and passes through Manjhi and Darauli. It serves ferries on the Gogra between Saran and the districts of Ballia and Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh.

Chapra-Sohansi Ghat road.—The total length of it is 30 miles. It leaves Chapra in a north-easterly direction, and passes through Mirzapore and Marhowrah, terminates at Sohansi on the Gandak south-east of Siwan.

Chapra-Sattar Ghat road.—The Sattar Ghat road of the District Board is 34 miles in length and runs almost due north to the Gandak. It is one of the most important roads in the district, connecting it with the southernmost portion of Champaran. This road for many miles passes through low *chaurs,* and until it was raised and metalled, was constantly damaged by floods.

Siwan-Maharajganj road.—It leads south-east for 12 miles to the important market of Maharajganj, and thence continues in the same direction to Rewa Ghat, 53 miles, and to Sonepur, 68 miles, thus crossing the roads of the Chapra-Rewa Ghat and the Chapra-Siwan and joins Chapra-Sonepur road at Dighwara.

Siwan-Sohagpur Ghat road.—The Siwan-Sohagpur Ghat road runs north-east for 10 miles to Barharia, to avoid marshy and low land, and from there to Sattar Ghat by a route necessarily devious for the same reason. The total length of this road is 35½ miles.

Siwan-Salimpur Ghat.—This road is identical, as far as Barharia, with the Siwan-Sattar Ghat road and thence runs through Barauli police-station to Salimpur Ghat, 15 miles.

Siwan-Guthni road.—The Siwan-Guthni road, 22 miles, *via* Mairwa, runs due west from Siwan till it reaches the Chapra border, which it follows south-west joining Chapra-Guthni road.

Siwan-Siswan road.—It is a major district road and its total length is 21 miles. The vehicular traffic on this road due to sugarcane is heavy. There is a plan to construct a bridge on the river Daha on the 17th mile of this road.

Andar-Raghunathpur road.—It is a major district road and its total length is 8 miles. The vehicular traffic on this road due to sugarcane is heavy.

Siwan-Basantpur-Mashrakh-Marhowrah road.—This road passes through central Saran and its total length is 42 miles. The District Board has inspection bungalows—one at Basantpur and another at Mashrakh.

ROADS UNDER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Chapra-Siwan road.—The main roads in Saran group themselves into the Chapra and the Siwan systems, these two principal towns being the forts of administration and trade in their respective neighbourhoods. It is a metalled road and its total length is 40 miles.

There is a large sugar factory at Pachrukhi which is situated on this road. The District Board has its inspection bungalows—one at Ekma and the other at Siwan on this road.

Chapra-Sonepur-Pahleza road.—This is one of the important highways of the district, 36 miles long, which runs in a general south-easterly direction through Dighwara to Sonepur, at the junction of the Gandak and the Ganga, famous for its shrine and great fair. A ferry and the Gandak bridge connect it with Hajipur in the Muzaffarpur district. A pontoon bridge has also been recently built to facilitate communication between Saran and Muzaffarpur districts.* A link road at the 30th mile of this road connects it with Pahleza Ghat, where a steam ferry of the North-Eastern Railway plies to and from Patna. Another scheme for a pontoon bridge on the river Ganga near Patna is under investigation. This road is metalled throughout and its total length is 36 miles.

Siwan-Mairwa road.—It serves as an important route for transport of sugarcane from hinterland to factories. Siwan and Mairwa are both stations of the North-Eastern Railway and are served by this road for the import and export of agricultural produce in the locality. The road forms an important link between Chapra and Deoria across the Gandak and Guthni Bazar. A *mela* on the Ram Navami day is held on the 12th mile of this road on the bank of river Jharhi. The total length of this road is 13 miles.

Chapra-Rewa Ghat road.—The Rewa Ghat road runs east-north through Garkha, where there is a police-station, and past Jalalpur and Makair to Rewa Ghat on the Gandak. The total length of this road is 25 miles.

Chapra-Marhowrah road.—It serves as an important route for transport for sugarcane to the sugar factory at Marhowrah. The first seven miles of the road has had an exceptional heavy vehicular traffic, as it is an outlet for marketing facilities to areas in central Saran, which has not yet provided with good roads. At Silouri which is on the 15th mile, a *mela* is held on the *Shivratri* day. There are a number of factories at Marhowrah, namely, Cawnpore Sugar Works, Saran Engineering, Marhowrah Distilleries, which also add to the vehicular importance of the road. The total length of this road is 17 miles.

Siwan-Gopalganj road.—The Siwan-Gopalganj road passes through Mirganj from where Hathwa is only 3 miles. From Mirganj it passes on to the north-west and leads to the outlying parts of the Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions and the boundary outpost of the district. The total length of this road is 20 miles.

* The pontoon is dismantled when the river is in spate. The present railway bridge is being substituted. It is in contemplation that the State Government will take over the present railway bridge and maintain it for vehicular and foot traffic (P. C. R. C.)

Siwan-Andar road.—The Siwan-Andar road goes due south from Siwan to the large village of Andar, 9 miles, where it bifurcates, one branch joining to Narhar Ghat on the Gogra and the other to Darauli on the same river. The total length of this road is 11 miles.

Mairwa-Darauli road.—The road takes off from Mairwa and termiates at Darauli at the bank of the Gogra. It serves as an important road for transport of sugarcane to Mairwa Railway Station and also to the New Siwan Sugar Factory. In mile 8th of this road near village Done, there is a mound which is reported to be the reminiscent of the *ashram* of the famous Dronacharyya of the Mahabharata. There is an inspection bungalow of the District Board on the 10th mile of the road. The total length of the road is 12 miles.

Bharatpokhar-Zeradai road.—The road has been thoroughly metalled and improved. The vehicular traffic on this road is heavy due to sugarcane. The total length of the road is 2½ miles.

The proposed National Highway no. 28 connecting Delhi to Kathmandu will pass through the district connecting Salimgarh on Uttar Pradesh border to Dumariaghat on Champaran border and will pass *via* the subdivisional town of Gopalganj. The survey for this scheme has been completed and the project is under the scrutiny of the Government.

Transport Vehicles.

The bullock-cart remains as it shall remain for a considerable time to come the main mode of transport in the district. With the recent development projects the importance of the bullock-carts has been underlined. The road programme visualises connecting up every single village with some other village or with the main road leading to the nearest market. The popular requirement for transport in the existing circumstances could only be met by the bullock-carts which are light but strong vehicle and drawn by a pair of bullocks which are also used for ploughing. There has not been much improvement in the mechanism of bullock-carts, as a matter of fact very little improvement could probably be effected. Fitting up of rubber tyres is a distinct improvement brought in by the European planters but unfortunately the idea has not caught. There was a survey in 1945 which recorded 32,076 bullock-carts in the district. There has not been any other survey. Bullock-carts are also used for transport of passengers. The bullock-carts are usually iron-shod and they damage the roads badly. Pack ponies are going out. Horse-drawn carriages for transporting goods are unknown. *Ekkas*, two-wheeled light vehicles with a flat platform as seat, drawn by a single horse are very commonly used for the transport of passengers. An *ekka* could carry four persons besides the driver comfortably but it is usually over-loaded. *Ekka* wheels on the average have a diameter of about 5 feet. *Ekkas* can ply practically on all kinds of tracks.

Bicycles are making a rapid headway and they are poor men's car. Almost every village has now got a number of bicycle owners. It is quite usual to see village pedlars carrying stuff for sale on their cycles.

Coming to power-propelled vehicles it has to be mentioned that in 1957 there were 69 passenger buses plying on the different routes of the district. There is no State Transport in Saran district and the permits for plying the buses had been obtained by the private individuals or companies from the North Bihar Transport Authority with headquarters at Muzaffarpur. This Authority has the Commissioner of Tirhut Division as the Chairman and several officials and non-officials as members. The Authority meets from time to time and reviews the road position and grants fresh permits, if necessary. The same Authority also grants permits to the private and public carriers for carrying goods. There were 80 private and public carriers plying in this district in 1957. The sugar mills have a number of private carrier trucks for the transport of the sugarcane. The truck traffic damages the road very badly. It is usual to find the trucks laden beyond the limit mentioned in the permit. The small number of the passenger buses and carrier trucks is due to the bad condition of the roads and particularly the bridges. Most of the bridges on the roads are incapable of taking the wear and tear of heavily laden trucks and already many of the culverts and bridges have now to be strengthened The routes over which the passenger bus services run are as follows :—

(1) Chapra—Muzaffarpur.
(2) Chapra—Sonepur.
(3) Chapra—Pahlezaghat.
(4) Chapra—Rewaghat.
(5) Chapra—Parsa.
(6) Chapra—Derhi Sutihar.
(7) Chapra—Amanaur *via* Aphar
(8) Chapra—Basantpur *via* Amanaur
(9) Chapra—Sohasighat.
(10) Chapra—Tereiya Sarjora.
(11) Chapra—Mashrakh.
(12) Chapra—Sahajitpur *via* Nagra and Baniapur.
(13) Chapra—Dahagarh.
(14) Chapra—Basantpur *via* Jalalpur
(15) Chapra—Goriakothi *via* Jalalpur and Basantpur.
(16) Chapra—Darauli *via* Marjhi and Raghunathpur.
(17) Chapra—Siwan.
(18) Chapra—Chainpur *via* Ekma and Rasalpur.
(19) Chapra—Dhorasthan *via* Ekma.
(20) Chapra—Maharajganj *via* Darandha.
(21) Chapra—Hathwa *via* Siwan and Mirganj.
(22) Chapra—Mirganj *via* Siwan.
(23) Siwan—Siwan *via* Hasanpura.

(24) Siwan—Raghunathpur *via* Andar.
(25) Siwan—Aswan *via* Andar.
(26) Siwan—Darauli *via* Andar and Aswan.
(27) Siwan—Darauli *via* Mairwa.
(28) Siwan—Guthni.
(29) Siwan—Gopalganj *via* Mirganj.
(30) Siwan—Goriakothi *via* Jano Bazar.
(31) Siwan—Mashrakh *via* Basantpur.
(32) Gopalganj—Kateya *via* Mirganj and Bhorey.

The bus fair is calculated to one anna for the first class, 9 pies for second class and 6 pies for third class per mile. The seating arrangements of the buses are not good. The buses constantly ply overloaded and there are no proper resting shed or lavatory arrangements at the bus stops on the way. There are no effective Bus Consumers' Association. The overloading shows there is a scope for more buses taking to the roads. There is hardly any competition with the Railways so far as passenger traffic is concerned.

Recently inter-district and inter-State trucks are running carrying goods. The fair is cheap and the service is good.

Rest Houses.

The District Board maintains three dak bungalows at each of the 3 subdivisional headquarters and 16 inspection bungalows at the following places :—

Sonepur, Dighwara, Parsa, Basantpur, Mashrakh, Maharajganj, Baniapur, Ekma, Siwan, Darauli, Mairwa, Bhorey Mirganj, Gopalganj, Siswan and Baragaon.

The Public Works Department maintains an inspection bungalow at Siwan. There is a Circuit House at Chapra which is meant only for the high Government officials and dignitaries. At Gopalganj there is a *sarai* also Primarily these bungalows were meant for the Government and the District Board's officials and members, but now non officials could also stay there on payment of certain charge

Dharmashalas which are old institutions are generally built by the munificence of the rich men. The number of *dharmashalas* is not big in the district. There are five *dharmashalas* at Chapra and one at Sonepur.

Railways.

North-Eastern Railway (Main Line).

The main line of the North-Eastern Railway, which was formerly called the Bengal and North-Western Railway and was the property of a private company, was constructed between November, 1881 and January, 1884. It runs through Saran district for 85 miles from a little beyond Mairwa in the north-west to Sonepur in the south-east.

Beyond Mairwa the line passes into the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh and runs on for another 61 miles to Gorakhpur: and at Sonepur the Gandak bridge links it with the whole of the Tirhut Division. It has developed a large goods traffic, both local and from points beyond the Saran district, and at certain seasons of the year, especially at the time of the Sonepur fair, its passenger traffic is very heavy. "The opening of this line and the construction of feeder roads by the District Board" mentions the last District Gazetteer, 1930, "have been of very great benefit to the district, for besides the usual advantages of improved communication and the development of trade, they have done much to mitigate the severity of famine". The following 19 stations of the main line of the North-Eastern Railway fall within the district :—

Sonepur, Parmanandpur, Nayagaon, Sitalpur, Dighwara, Awatarnagar, Baragopal, Goldenganj, Chapra Katchery, Chapra, Kopasamhoata, Daudpur, Ekma, Chainwa, Dharaundha, Pachrukhi, Siwan, Jiradai and Mairwa.

Sonepur—Pahleza (Branch Section).

From Banwar Chak to Sonepur there is a short loop line passing Pahleza Ghat on the Ganga, where a steam ferry of the North Eastern Railway plies to and from Digha and Mahendru Ghat in the Patna district. The total length of this section is 6 miles when Pahleza Ghat is stationed at Banwar Chak. But the length is subject to fluctuation with the change in the course of the river Ganga. The passenger traffic of this section is very heavy, for it is the main feeder which connects North Bihar with South Bihar and its capital Patna. The Sonepur-Pahleza section was opened to traffic from the 15th January 1885.

Chapra-Manjhi Section (Varanasi Branch).

A branch line, the Revelganj-Balia branch runs for 10 miles from Chapra *via* Revelganj to Manjhi where a bridge across the Gogra maintains connection with Varanasi. The Chapra-Manjhi section commenced working from the 15th April 1891. After the opening of the line the distance between Daraundha and Maharajganj was also linked by rail on 1st April 1907. Three railway stations, namely, Revelganj, Revelganj Ghat and Manjhi are within this section.

Mashrakh Branch.

The Chapra-Mashrakh section was opened for traffic from the 20th March 1910. The total length of the section is 65 miles and the following 11 railway stations fall within the district excluding Chapra and Chapra Katchery :—

Khaira, Paterhi, Marhowrah, Shamkuria Halt, Mashrakh, Rajapatti, Dighwa Dubauli, Sidhwalia, Ratau Sarai, Manjhagarh and Harkhua.

Siwan Loop.

The Gorakhpur-Sonepur section *via* Siwan was opened for traffic from the 1st April, 1907 and extended up to Captainganj from the 26th April, 1913. The total length of the section within the district is 29 miles and the following 6 railway stations are within the district :—

Sewan Katchery, Ahnorisarsar, Hathua, Thawe, Sasamusa and Jalalpur.

Inward and Outward Traffic.

The inward and outward traffic of goods and passengers of the important railway stations of the district is given below :—

Chapra Railway Station.

This is a big junction of the North-Eastern Railway. The average monthly traffic dealt with at the station is as follows* :—

Outward passengers	..	..	43,893
Inward parcels	..	..	800 maunds.
Outward parcels	.	..	3,000 maunds.
Inward goods	..	..	4,500 maunds.
Outward goods	..	..	18,000 maunds.
Average monthly earnings		.	3,11,718 rupees.

Main export traffic goods of this station are potatoes, cauliflower and onions and of import, grains

Siwan Railway Station.

Siwan is an important railway station of the North-Eastern Railway. Main traffic dealt with at this station are sugar and vegetables. Details of the average monthly traffic of this station are given below .—

Outward passengers	..	..	49,832
Inward parcels	..	.	4 958 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	..	806 maunds.
Inward goods	..	..	1,10,778 maunds
Outward goods	..	..	28,401 maunds
Average monthly earnings .		..	1,52,225 rupees.

Sonepur Railway Station.

Sonepur is the headquarters of the traffic and mechanical district of the railway. Up till 1950 the Sonepur platform was the longest in the world, but now its place is taken by Storvick in Sweden and it is now the second longest platform in the world. The length of

* The figures were collected in 1958 (P. C. R. C.)

this platform is 2,415 feet. Details of inward and outward passengers from 1948 to 1955 are given below :—

Year.			Inward passengers.	Outward passengers.
1948	..	..	1,45,440	1,30,426
1949	..	..	2,03,346	1,50,986
1950	..	..	1,42,195	1,31,622
1951	..	..	1,33,803	1,23,370
1952	..	..	1,27,899	1,17,336
1953	..	..	92,925	95,068
1954	..	..	1,13,022	1,13,863
1955	..	..	1,33,181	1,25,849*

Marhowrah Railway Station.

Three factories, namely, C. E. Morton and Company, Begg Sutherland and Company and Saran Engineering Company are within the precincts of Marhowrah which produce sugar, spirit and machineries. respectively. Details of the average monthly traffic dealt at this station are given below :—

Outward passengers	..	..	17,655
Inward parcels	..	..	710 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	..	820 maunds.
Inward goods	.	..	44,440 maunds.
Outward goods	..	..	49,265 maunds.

Other traffic dealt with at this station are potatoes and cattle.

Mashrak Railway Station.

Cattle and potatoes are mainly exported from this station. Details of the average monthly traffic dealt with are given below :—

Outward passengers	.	..	1,360
Inward parcels	..	.	108 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	.	105 maunds.
Inward goods	.	..	17,695 maunds.
Outward goods	..	..	2,585 maunds.

Khairah Railway Station.

Main traffic dealt with at this station are cattle, hides and potatoes which are exported. Details of average monthly traffic are given below :—

Outward passengers		..	9.536
Inward parcels	.	.	40 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	.	40 maunds.
Inward goods	.	.	3,632 maunds.
Outward goods	..	..	1,334 maunds.

* The heavy passenger traffic is due to Sonepur fair which is held once a year. (F. C. R. C.)

Chapra Katchery Railway Station.

Details of the average monthly traffic of this station are as follows :—

Outward passengers	..	..	44,133
Inward parcels	..	..	4,095 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	..	831 maunds.

(Goods booking is not allowed here.)

Hathua Railway Station.

Main traffic of export from this station are sugar, spirit, timber, oilseed and molasses. Details of the average monthly traffic are given below :—

Outward passengers	..	..	21,822
Inward parcels	..	..	290 maunds.
Outward parcels	..	..	80 maunds.
Inward goods	..	..	1,13,056 maunds.
Outward goods	..	..	1,04,373 maunds.

ROLE OF RAIL AND ROADS IN ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE PEOPLE.

Both railways and roads have played a very important role in the economic life of the district. It cannot be said that there is any competition between the railways and the roads. As a matter of fact some of the important roads run parallel to the railway lines and in spite of a fleet of buses and carrier trucks plying over long distance, the trains are always overcrowded. In the recent decades the road ways in Saran district have vastly improved. One decade back it would have taken several hours to cover the distance of about 60 miles between Chapra, the district headquarters, and Gopalganj, a subdivisional headquarters. One can now go right from Pahlezaghat on the other side of Patna and motor up to almost the end of the district on the border of Uttar Pradesh at an average speed of 40 miles per hour.

The railways have been separately described. There has not been any expansion of the railways in recent years. There is no present scheme to make expansion in any section where there are no railways. There is no doubt that there have been improvements for railway travelling and more passenger and goods trains are moving on the lines.* But in spite of increased facilities it cannot be said that the railways are quite adequate for the demand. The over crowding of the passenger trains, the very frequent complaint of late running of the trains,† the delay in the transhipment of goods by

* Covered sheds at the main stations, rest-rooms, catering facilities, more trains are some of the amenities recently introduced There is, however, still scope for improvement. (P. C R. C.)

† The N. E Railway was previously known as Oudh and Tirhut Railway and O. T. R. had earned the joke of being the Old and Tired Railway by her late runnings. (P. C. R. C)

goods trains could indicate that there cannot be any competition between the railways, waterways and roadways. As a matter of fact we could have more of vehicles on waterways, railways and roadways. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the development of roads has followed much later than the introduction of the railways. The Public Works Department came into existence in the district so far as roads are concerned only about a decade back. This is one of the reasons why the condition of the roads which was in the hands of the District Board was rather deplorable.

The district is deficit so far as rice production is concerned. Saran is also liable to frequent floods and there are pockets of scarcity which are invariably affected in droughts or floods. For all these reasons it is very necessary to have proper facilities for quick movement of foodgrains and this is not possible without more of good communication.

WATER TRANSPORT.

Saran being a riverine district, water transport plays an important role in the means of transport. In the past when the railways and other steam services were not developed, boats were the chief means for transport of goods and passengers. Previously river-borne traffic was heavy in Saran due to the perennial navigation in its great rivers the Ganga, Gogra and the Gandak. W. W. Hunter in the *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Volume XI, published in 1877, mentions that "Revelganj, in the district of Saran, appears as the second largest river mart with a Ganges-borne trade in Bengal. In exports it stands first of all, but in imports it is headed by Patna; and the average of both exports and imports added together exceeds ten lakhs of maunds per annum". The importance of Revelganj is on decline due to the diminution in the river-borne traffic. From the old correspendence volumes it appears that boat making as an industry was once flourishing in Saran. Now this industry has practically declined and only small size boats called *dingis* are still manufactured at village Sonaur, police-station Baikunthpur and some of the villages of Govindganj and Dumaria police-stations. These boats are used for ferry for small goods and passengers.

Though inland water transport has declined still its possibility in Saran is very great. Saran district is surrounded with its great rivers the Ganga, Gogra and Gandak. The Gandak enters the district near Gopalganj and joins the Ganga at Sonepur. It has a total of 72 miles of river course in Saran. The important *ghats* in the district are Dumarian, Dipan, Sattar, Bangra, Swanshi, Sohagpur, Dumari, Rewaghat, Barve and Sonepur.

It is navigable by boats up to 400 maunds capacity during the rainy season. The water level near the confluence of the Ganga and Gandak in Sonepur is shallow and uncertain. At times due to the sharp current of the Gandak boats of 300 to 400 maunds

capacity take a week to cover the distance of 3 miles, i.e., from the railway bridge to the confluence. In flood time, the Gandak is turbulent and notorious for eroding its banks and changing its course. Absence of big towns, the turbulent nature of the river during rains, lack of metalled roads connected with *ghats* and uncertain depth at and near the confluence, have rendered the river to be of little commercial importance.

At present grains, wood and baskets manufactured from bamboo are transported down the river Ganga and from there to Bihar, Bengal and Assam. From Patna only coal is imported through the Gandak. It takes about five days to reach Patna from Swanshighat and 20 to 25 days are required to reach back Swanshi from Patna. The freight rates for 200 maunds capacity of boat is Rs. 45 to Rs. 50 which cannot be called cheap. For going down the stream from Swanshighat to Patna and return, the freight is usually charged Rs. 50 per 100 maunds.

Of all the *ghats* mentioned above Govindganj, Rewa and Sonepur are important. Govindganj provides direct link between Gopalganj and Bettiah; the two subdivisional headquarters of Saran and Champaran respectively. The roads connecting Govindganj with Gopalganj and Bettiah are not metalled otherwise it would have gained more importance. The shortest distance between Chapra and Muzaffarpur is through Rewaghat and the road is all along metalled. The construction of pontoon bridge over the Gandak has made Sonepur Ghat more important. *Kirana* goods (groceries) are mostly sent through boats from Marufganj (Patna City) to Bhairopur Ghat in the Muzaffarpur district and from there to Chapra and Muzaffarpur by road.

The Gogra.—It touches Saran about four miles north-west of Darauli and joins near Chapra with the river Ganga. It forms the natural boundary and separates Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh from Saran. The Gogra travels a distance of 28 miles along the boundary of Saran. Though the area through which it flows has lesser rainfall than the basin of the Gandak yet the discharge of water flown through it is generally greater than that of the Gandak. The reason is that the Gogra basin is much bigger in area than that of the Gandak. The important *ghats* along its bank are Darauli, Siswan and Manjhi.

It is navigable throughout the year. The Gogra is deeper than the Gandak. Though there are important towns (like Ayodhya) situated along the bank in Uttar Pradesh yet in Saran no big towns could be established along its bank. The reason is that the lower part of the Gogra is more turbulent than its upper part. The river is approachable by roads at three places, viz., Darauli, Siswan and Chapra. Darauli Ghat has some importance as a sub-station of the Indian General Navigation Company. But the suspension of the Indian General Navigation Company in 1958 has affected the trade

and commerce of the place adversely. The nearest railway station of Darauli is Mairwa at a distance of 12 miles.

Prior to partition of India in 1947 about 15 to 20 steamers of this Company used to ply daily on the Gogra-Gandak waters. But after that the number was reduced to three. It takes about 12 hours to reach Patna from Darauli by a steamer whereas by road and rail, it takes about 20 hours to cover the distance. This shows distinctly that there is great need for water transport between some stations at least. Big boats generally do not ply between Darauli and Manjhi, but boats up to two thousand maunds of capacity regularly ply in river in Uttar Pradesh. There is also a potentiality of the inland water transport between the places of commercial importance lying in Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar.

The small ferry service at Darauli has double control. In the Bihar side the District Board, Saran, allots the *ghat* to a contractor by auction while in opposite side it is done by the District Board of Ballia. There is mutual understanding between the contractor of both sides. A passenger crossing the Gogra from north to south has to pay toll to the contractor of Uttar Pradesh.

Ganga.—The Ganga flows for a very short distance in the southern part of Saran. But commercial importance of the river-borne traffic of the Ganga is comparatively greater than the other rivers. The reason is that bulk of the commodities consumed in Saran are imported from Patna, viz., grains, groceries, fuel, oil and coal. Wheat and vegetable oil are generally brought by rail from the western part of India. Salt is imported from Rajasthan *via* Patna. Some commodities of the Western India are also brought *via* Buxar. The important *ghats* of the Ganga in Saran are Maharajganj, Sherpur, Doriganj, Dumari, Dighwara, Pahleza and Sonepur.

Boats carrying goods of Western India anchor at Maharajganj or Sherpur and coming from the eastern side at Dighwara. A few years back Doriganj was an important place for river-borne traffic but due to change in the river course of the Ganga it is now replaced by Dighwara. Sand of Sone river is in great demand for construction of houses. Though Doriganj is just opposite to the river Sone yet owing to change in the river course and want of the facility for transport by rail, boats carrying sand generally anchor at Dighwara *ghat* and from there it is transported by rail. Two miles upstream from Doriganj is Sherpur *ghat* where passengers cross the Ganga for Arrah. But boats loaded with sand, grain, kerosene oil, coal and grocery anchor at Dighwara. The freight charge of a boat from Patna to Dighwara for coal, grain and kerosene oil and sand is Rs. 5, Rs. 2-8-0 and Rs. 2, respectively.

Pahleza Ghat is under the administration of the North-Eastern Railway. Passengers as well as goods to and from Patna cross the river generally by the steamer. Due to the variation in the water

level of the Ganga the *ghat* has to be shifted from place to place. During rains the *ghat* is shifted to Banwar Chak which is connected with Chapra by a metalled road and the regular bus service run between Chapra and Pahleza Ghat. Boat traffic of the *ghat* is also heavy specially during the Sonepur fair. Regular boats ply to and from Pahlezaghat, Mahendrughat, Ranighat and Antaghat in Patna.

But with the suspension of the Indian General Steam Navigation Company from January, 1958, which had regular steamer service up and down in the Ganga and Gogra throughout their course along the district, starting from Digha Ghat with a terminus at Burhraj in Gorakhpur district, the river-borne traffic of the district had suffered a lot. Before the extension of the Bengal and North-Western Railway now the North-Eastern Railway from Hajipur to Katihar the passengers traffic by steamers from Saran to Bengal and Assam was considerable. A casual steamer service managed by the Ganga Brahmaputra Water Transport now plies to and from Patna and Chapra *ghat* but without a large number of regular steamer service the situation could not improve.

The Daha and Mahi rivers are also navigable to a certan extent by country boats during the rainy season. The former river was about three decades before navigable by large boats as far as Siswan all the year round except in very dry years; but the damming up of the stream for purposes of irrigation and the increase of cultivation of *boro* rice in its bed had led to the silting up of the river.

FERRIES.

Numerous important ferries cross the Ganga, Gandak and Gogra rivers, and maintain communication with the neighbouring districts. The principal ferries on the Ganga are from Pahleza to Kurji in Patna, from Panapur to Nasriganj in the same district, from Doriganj to Bingawan in Shahabad, and from Telpa to Emawana. On the Gogra those most used are from Revelganj to Chaku Tola, from Manjhi to Chak Diara, from Domaigarh to Gopalnagar in Ballia, and from Darauli to Gosainpur in the same district. On the Gandak there are four important ferries leading to places in Muzaffarpur, viz., from Tharah Harinbandha to Rewa, from Barway and Darihara to Basant, from Hasanpur Bania to Sohagpur, and from Sarangpur-Saguni to Sohansi Ghat; and there are three principal ferries leading to places in Champaran, viz., from Dumaria to Rampurwa, from Salimpur to Gobindganj, and from Sattar Ghat to Dhekaha.

Boats.

There are several kinds of boats in general use on the Saran rivers The larger boats are the *ulank*, which has a long narrow bow overhanging the water, the *melni*, which has a broad bluff bow and the *pataili* (also called in Saran *kalra*) a broad-beamed boat drawing but little water, the sides of which are formed of planks

overlapping each other, in other words, it is clinker built. Among smaller boats may be mentioned the ordinary *dingi*, and *pansuhi*, which has a round bottom but can ply in shallow water.

CIVIL AVIATION.

The district is not connected by the regular air route. There are two landing grounds, one at Chapra and the other at Hathwa, where small aeroplane lands.

POSTAL COMMUNICATION.

Post Offices.

All the post offices of the district are under the jurisdiction of the Saran Postal Division with its headquarters at Chapra. For administrative purpose, the Superintendent of the Saran Postal Division is the head authority and is assisted by three Inspectors. Chapra and Siwan are the chief receiving and disbursing post offices which control all the sub-post offices of the district. Besides, Chapra and Siwan, there are 51 sub-offices and 404 branch offices in the district. The branch post offices serve the nearby villages besides those in which they are located. The mails are delivered daily or periodically in the villages by postmen employed in these post offices. At all post offices, including branch post offices, postage stamps, postcards and envelopes are sold and money-orders received and issued. At sub-offices postal savings banks and national savings certificates booths are run. The mails are carried by various railway lines, buses and in some cases by postal runners. The volumes of letters handled during 1956-57 were 6,34,273 as against 4,09,112 in 1955-56. The figures of the amount of savings banks deposits were Rs. 94,82,592-5-9 and withdrawals Rs. 77,40,946-6-1 in 1956-57 as against Rs. 90,18,493-14-3 and Rs. 70,16,781-2-6, respectively, in 1955-56. The figures under national savings certificates issued and discharged in 1956-57 are Rs. 6,65,905 and Rs. 1,98,687, respectively, as against Rs. 2,36,695 and Rs. 1,24,327, respectively in 1955-56. The amount of money-order received and issued during 1956-57 was Rs. 3,00,29,231 and Rs. 66,96,144, respectively, as against Rs. 2,98,082 and Rs. 64,83,684, respectively, in 1955-56.

TELEGRAPHS.

There are 42 combined post and telegraph offices including Chapra and Siwan. These telegraph offices are at Amnaur, Andar, Baniapur, Barauli, Barharia, Basantpur, Bhore, Chainpur, Darauli, Daraunda, Dighwara, Ekma, Daudpur, Gangpur, Siwan, Garh Manjhi Garha, Guthni, Gopalganj, Hathwa, Hussainganj, Kateya, Kujhwa, Maharajganj, Mairwa, Bheldo, Manjhi, Marhowrah, Mashrakh, Mirganj, Mustafabad, Nagrah, Nayagaon, Pachrukhi, Parsa, Revelganj, Sasamusa, Zeradai, Sonepur, Taraya and Dighwa Dubauli. Telegraph offices are also located at the various stations of the North Eastern Railways.

TELEPHONES.

All the abovementioned 42 combined post and telegraph offices have telephone facilities. There are 7 public call offices at Chapra, Siwan, Gopalganj, Maharajganj, Mirganj and Zeradai. The Chapra telephone exchange office is the main exchange office and all the calls of the other six stations are being put through by it. It has a direct link with Muzaffarpur and Patna. The Chapra telephone exchange office is also connected with the rest of India by inland trunk exchanges. The average daily trunk call at Chapra is 60 and at Siwan 12. The calls of the other offices are negligible.

Radio and Wireless.

The district has altogether 1,042 radio sets in 1956-57 as against 961 in 1955-56. Of these, 934 are owned by domestic uses, 47 by various educational institutions. Public Relations Department of the Government of Bihar has distributed 200 radio sets in the district for the benefit of rural population and special rural programmes in the regional language are broadcast from the Patna station of All-India Radio. The licenses for the use of radio sets are issued by the local post office on behalf of the Government of India. The yearly license fee is Rs. 15 per set.

There are three wireless stations in the district, each at the subdivisional headquarters of Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj. But they have been set up exclusively for administrative purpose since 1946.

ORGANISATION OF OWNERS AND EMPLOYEES.

The organisations of owners and employees in the field of transport and communication do exist in the district but on a very limited scale. There are associations of bus owners and employees in the district. The Bus and Truck Owners' Association, Chapra, is run by a Board of 7 members out of which 4 are its executive members and the rest 3 are Secretary, President and Joint Secretary. The Bus and Truck Employees' Association of Chapra consists of 10 members out of which 6 are its executive members and 4 as President, Vice-President, Secretary and Assistant Secretary. The associations are not very active.

The rickshaw-pullers have an association of their own in Chapra. In this association there are 16 members including the President and Secretary. There is also an association of the employees of *tamtam* in which there are 13 members including the President and Secretary All these associations are unregistered.

A REVIEW.

There has been a great improvement in the communications of the district in the last decade and particularly for roadways and railways. There has, however, been a decline in water-borne traffic and the closure in 1958 of the Steam Navigation Company which had

been plying cargo and passenger boats for over a centurty has not yet been replaced. The Steam Navigation Company gave out that they could not run the line economically and the partition of the country in 1947 and the creation of East Pakistan created special problems for them. The matter has been under investigation of both the State and Central Governments. There is no apparent move to fill up the vacuum in the private sector. Water transport by power gives a quicker connection with the neighbouring districts of Shahabad and Patna.

In spite of the improvement of the roadways there will be further provision for more and better roads in the Second and Third Five-Year Plans. The present mileage, distribution and condition of the roads cannot be said to be adequate. At the present there is practically only agricultural economy in a district and there are hundreds of villages which do not have a road connecting to the nearest main artery. The agricultural produce cannot be reached quickly to the nearest primary markets. The wastage of man-power for reaching the agricultural commodities to the nearest primary market is colossal. A pair of bullocks and on the average a couple of men have to wait several days if a cart-load of grains or sugarcanes has to be taken to the market or the sugar mills. Unless and until every village is connected with the nearest main artery, the agricultural economy of the district cannot improve We have to visualise a mixed economy for the district to stop her lop-sided development. No industrialisation can thrive without proper roads. The difficulty of getting the basic materials like stone-chips, bitumen, etc. would be partially solved by the quicker connecting link with South Bihar

The problem of a competition between the three ways of communication water, road and railways has not risen so far The railways have not opened up new lines and the chronic over-crowding of the railways with passenger and goods traffic go against the theory of any competition. It is difficult to visualise in the near future any large increase in the number of passenger and goods train. The solution of the problem of reaching increased output to the markets and the growing passenger traffic to their destination will have to be found more in the roadways and waterways. This district with an extensive area, the highest density of population within the State and a very close land use, needs more facilities for communication and any large-scale development programme will have to substantially depend on the development of communications.

CHAPTER VIII.

ECONOMIC TRENDS.

LIVELIHOOD PATTERN.

A separate chapter on economic trends will naturally mean a certain amount of repetition of the coverage in some other chapters. But this cannot be helped. As mentioned before, agriculture is the main occupation of the district. From the perusal of the different Census Reports from 1891 to 1951, *Survey and Settlement Operations* of 1893 to 1901 and 1915 to 1921 and the *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Volume XI, it appears that the livelihood pattern of the district has, more or less, remained at a point where it was about half a century before. In 1891 about 85 per cent of the population were found to be engaged in agriculture and pastoral occupations as against 81 per cent in 1901. The *Survey and Settlement Operations* of 1893 to 1901 mentions that "84 per cent of the total population of Saran or just over two million souls are entirely dependent on agriculture as a means of livelihood. A quarter of a million of these have no land at all or only minute plots and are practically dependent on the wages of labour. Another quarter of a million have small holdings not exceeding two acres on the average of each family. There are pure cultivators who only work in their own fields."

In the census of 1911, 86 per cent of the population were enumerated as dependent on agriculture as against 90.1 per cent in 1921. The Census Report of 1931 does not classify the figures of non-working dependents of each and every group, nevertheless it gives light on the occupational trends of the district. According to the census report, out of the total population, 10,00,424 were working persons (including working dependents and persons having subsidiary occupations) of which 399 were engaged in agriculture. The census of 1941 does not mention the figures for occupations.

According to 1951 census, out of the total population of 31,55,144, 90 per cent of the population or 28,62,950 souls were found to be dependent on agriculture. In 1951 census the livelihood classes have been distributed into eight classes and further each livelihood class into three sub-classes

The agricultural livelihood classes were distributed as follows :—

Agricultural classes.		Male.	Female.
(1) Self-supporting persons	..	5,99,282	2,46,096
(2) Non-earning dependents	.	7,18,613	12,32,718
(3) Earning dependents	..	37,204	31,037
Total (28,64,950)	..	13,55,099	15,09,851

Further the agricultural classes have been divided into four categories. They are as follows :—

(1) Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependents—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	4,84,467	1,89,315
Non-earning dependents	..	5,67,340	9,71,309
Earning dependents	..	28,188	25,202

(2) Cultivators of land wholly or mainly unowned and their dependents—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	32,967	14,494
Non-earning dependents	..	39,246	66,842
Earning dependents	..	2,832	2,574

(3) Cultivating labourers and their dependents—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	77,000	41,247
Non-earning dependents	..	1,09,810	1,90,109
Earning dependents	..	5,986	3,112

(4) Non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent-receivers and their dependents—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	2,848	1,040
Non-earning dependents	..	2,217	4,458
Earning dependents	..	203	149

Non-agricultural classes have been divided into four categories. They are as follows :—

		Male.	Female.
(1) Self-supporting persons	..	60,290	17,526
(2) Non-earning dependents	..	84,279	1,21,455
(3) Earning dependents	..	3,585	5,059
Total (2,92,194)	..	1,48,154	1,44,040

(1) Production (other than cultivation)—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	13,217	3,935
Non-earning dependents	..	20,890	30,964
Earning dependents	..	911	1,365

(2) Commerce—

		Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons	..	19,208	5,539
Non-earning dependents	..	25,116	35,378
Earning dependents	..	668	1,714

(3) Transport—

	Male.	Female.
Self-earning persons ..	3,018	392
Non-earning dependents ..	3,660	5,015
Earning dependents ..	84	254

(4) Other services and miscellaneous sources—

	Male.	Female.
Self-supporting persons ..	24,847	7,660
Non-earning dependents ..	34,613	50,098
Earning dependents ..	1,922	1,726

Thus from the perusal of the abovementioned figures, it is apparent that the number of economically active persons is not considerable. Out of the total population, only 9,23,194 persons are self-supporting and 17,288 earning dependents or number of such persons comes to about 30 per cent. The rest 70 per cent population are entirely dependent on the economically active persons. But the statement seems to be partially true since in the figures the house-wives whose roles are not insignificant have not been included in the category of the economically active persons.

The district being predominantly agricultural, the pressure on the soil is enormous. So far as industries are concerned the census of 1951 mentions that there were 50 rice, flour, oil and *dal* mills, 3 distilleries and breweries, 8 sugar and *gur* mills, and 3 ice-cream, candy and cold storages which had been registered under the Factories Act. The total number of persons employed in these industries were 3,820. The other big factories which were registered under the Factories Act were one brick, lime, tile and *surkhi* industry, 2 soap factories, 5 general engineering, 1 electrical generation and transmission factory and in 1951 their total strength of employees in them was only 585. Apart from the factories registered under the Factory Act there were 3,591 textile establishments and the people employed in these small-scale industries were 8,778 as whole-timers and 253 as part-timers. The total strength of non-textile establishments was 1,540 and they afforded engagement of 3,575 persons. All these industries gave employment to 17,011 persons.

From the analysis of the foregoing statement it can be safely said that the existing industries of the district are far too few and could never absorb the surplus of such people who could be utilised in heavy industries. Under the present condition, agriculture is incapable of supporting any considerable increase of the population without a considerable material reduction in the standard of living which is already not high. There is a heavy weightage for agricultural economy but even that does not make this district self-supporting. As discussed elsewhere the district produces barely sufficient food for its own requirements and has to depend on the import of cereals from the neighbouring districts. The picture thus drawn is far

from satisfactory. Apart from the landless labourers, whose condition at present is not very sound, the rest of the agricultural community normally enjoy a level slightly above subsistence and are capable to withstand a season of scarcity for a short time. Unscientific fragmentation of holdings, dependence of agriculture on the freak of nature and unscientific indigenous method of cultivation stand on the way. Some improvements, no doubt, have been made by the State Government but any phenomenal change in the incidence of agriculture cannot be expected quickly.

The total number of persons dependent on commerce in 1951 was 87,623 out of which 27,129 persons were economically active and 60,494 were non-earning dependents. Thus on the whole about 3 per cent of the population are dependent on commerce. The chief commodities for import are rice, salt, cloth, coal and kerosene oil while chief commodities for export are potatoes. sugar and mustard-seed. Saltpetre which formed one of the chief commodities for export in the third quarter of the nineteenth century has received a great set back due to foreign substitutes.

The number of persons dependent on transport was 12,423 out of which 3,478 were economically active and 8,675 were non-earning dependent members. Thus about 4 per cent of the population were dependent on transport. In other services and miscellaneous sources 36,155 persons were economically active while 87,711 were non-earning dependents; thus on the whole about 4 per cent were dependent on other services and miscellaneous sources. Taken as a whole 2,92,194 persons were non-agricultural classes out of which 86,460 were economically active and 2,05,734 were non-earning dependents or only 29.5 per cent were economically active and 69.5 per cent were non-earning dependents.

Thus both in agriculture and non-agriculture pursuits, the picture drawn above is far from satisfactory. In both the sectors the number of non-earning dependents is about 3.3 times greater than the economically active persons. It is strange that the housewives have not been considered economically active population. Their contribution in the family life in terms of money means a lot.

It would not be out of place to mention here that the people of Saran are adventurous and enterprising Emigration affords a partial relief to the pressure on soil. Much of the emigration is seasonal, occurring about the end of November and lasting for three or four months. The people of Saran are found almost in all parts of India. The average annual money-orders paid in Saran comes to more than Rs. 5 crores, the greater part of which comes outside the district.

Level of Prices and Wages.

There has been an enormous increase in the level of price. Some of the Old English Correspondence Volumes kept in the

District Archives, Chapra, indicate the level of prices and wages. In 1790* the commonest sort of the rice sold at 74¼ seers, wheat at 85¼ seers and Janira at 135 seers per Company's rupee. In 1868 the average price of rice was 22¼ seers; in 1869, 15 seers 5 *chhatacks,* in 1870, 20 seers 1 *chhatack,* in 1871-72, 19 seers 8 *chhatacks*; and in 1872-73, 16 seers 6 *chhataks,* per rupee. Similarly wheat in 1867 was at 19 5/12 seers, in 1869 at 19 5/12 seers, in 1871 at 20 seers 5 *chhatacks* and in 1872, at 15 seers 5 *chhatacks,* per rupee. Barley was sold at 27 seers 5 *chhatacks* per rupee in 1871, and at 27 seers 7 *chhatacks in* 1872.

The Collector in his Administration Report for 1873 selects two marts, Chapra and Siwan, and gives the average prices of the principal grains for the years 1871-72 and 1872-73 as follows :—

Common rice—

In 1871-72 at Chapra 20.3 seers per rupee; at Siwan 19.4.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 17.5 seers per rupee; at Siwan 15.8.

Pulses—

In 1871-72 at Chapra 19.3 seers per rupee; at Siwan 18.3.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 15 seers per rupee; at Siwan 14.0.

Wheat—

In 1871-72 at Chapra 20.1 seers per rupee; at Siwan 20.9.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 14.7 seers per rupee; at Siwan 15.3.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 11.3 seers per rupee; at Siwan 12.1.

Barley—

In 1871-72 at Chapra 28.5 seers per rupee; at Siwan 26.5.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 28.1 seers per rupee; at Siwan 23.3.

Indian corn—

In 1871-72 at Chapra 24.8 seers per rupee; at Siwan 23.5.
In 1872-73 at Chapra 28.6 seers per rupee; at Siwan 26.2.

These figures could well be compared with later figures.

The last *District Gazetteer of Saran,* published in 1930, mentions that in 1928 rice sold at an average of 5¼ seers to the rupee at Chapra, 6 seers 15 *chhatacks* at Mirganj and 4 seers 14 *chhatacks* at Siwan; at the same places *makai* (maize) sold at 9 seers 9 *chhatacks,* 10 seers 6 *chhatacks* and 8¼ seers, respectively. In 1927 rice averaged 6 seers at Chapra, 6 seers 7 *chhatacks* at Mirganj and 4¾ seers at Siwan, while *makai* sold on an average at 9½ seer, 10 seers 11 *chhatacks* and 8¼ seers, respectively, at the same centres. Maize and rice are the staple food crops of the district.

The *District Census Hand-Book,* 1952, gives the ruling prices during the decade 1941 to 1950. The figures of prices are given

* The figures have been taken from the Hunters' *Statistical Account of Bengal* (Saran District), page 270, published in 1877.

monthlywise. The average yearly price of rice, wheat and gram is given below :—

(Price per maund.)

Year.		Rice. (Medium.)			Wheat. (Red.)			Gram.		
Year.		Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
1941	..	5	8	0		..		3	4	8
1942	...	.6	4	9½		..		4	9	9
1943	..	16	3	6½	16	8	3¾	10	4	3½
1944	..	12	13	10¾	13	10	10	10	1	3
1945	..	13	9	4	11	6	0	8	7	8
1946	..	15	12	0	13	13	4	11	9	8
1947	..	15	8	5	12	1	5¼	15	12	3
1948	..	21	10	0	26	12	0	14	8	8
1949	..	23	15	4	23	6	8	14	10	0
1950	..	29	12	0	25	7	8	18	3	4

From the figures mentioned above it is apparent that the price of foodgrains had increased tremendously. In 1950 during the crucial period of October rice was even sold at 44 rupees per maund. After 1950 the same trend was noticeable in the prices of foodgrains. There had been failures of crops in 1956-57 and 1957-58 and in order to arrest the rising prices of foodgrains the Government had no other alternative but to open fair price shops where wheat was sold at Rs. 14-8-0 per maund. In July, 1958, there were 1,303 fair price shops and 13,64,138 maunds of wheat and wheat seeds were distributed.

In the past, agricultural wages were mostly paid in kind. There are frequent references of agricultural wages in the Old Correspondence Volume which throw a good deal of light on the condition of labourers. Regarding the wages of day labourers it appears from a letter, dated the 11th April 1834, that the *Nuniyas* were employed at Rs. 2-4-0 per cubic feet on contract. Daily coolies were available and the daily wages were 5 pice, 4 pice and 3 pice per man, woman and boy, respectively. From a letter, dated the 12th September 1820, from the Officer Incharge of the Champaran Light Infantry, to the Judge and Magistrate, it appears that the wages were comparatively cheaper at that time than 1834.

The *Survey and Settlement Operations* of 1893—1901 mentions that wages were actually paid in kind though for the purpose of convenience they had been calculated in rupees and annas. The

ordinary wages for *tamni* (digging) was three local seers of grain and one seer of *sattu* per day. The money value of them was about two annas. Ploughmen and ordinary male labourers got about three annas per day. For transplanting, necessary in case of paddy and *marua,* the rates were slightly higher than those for ordinary agricultural labourer, but their money value hardly exceeded two annas per *diem.* The wages for weeding and for carting manures were one and a half anna per labourer employed. For harvesting operations, payment was made by giving the labourer a share of the produce; the share varied from one-sixteenth to one-twentieth. The average earning for irrigation was one and half annas per day. The wages of the watchman, the blacksmith and others indirectly interested in the crop came to about one-fortieth of the produce. They were always paid in kind.

Regarding the current wages the last District Gazetteer published in 1930 mentions that " Skilled carpenters earn rupee one a day and the less skilled about 14 annas. Masons get 12 annas and blacksmiths from 10 annas to 14 annas. Ploughmen and ordinary male labourers generally get 12 annas a day and women and children half that amount. A cart is hired for Rs. 2 a day. Domestic servants are usually paid about Rs. 4 a month with food and clothings besides. *Syas* (grooms) get Rs. 10 or Rs. 12 a month and sweepers Rs. 7, *dhobies* (washermen) are paid 8 annas for 20 articles, and a barber gets one anna a shave ".

The above figures are considerably higher than those ascertained at the wage-census in 1924; and the latter again were from 95 per cent (in the case of blacksmiths and carpenters) to 38 per cent (in the case of unskilled daily labour paid in cash) higher than the figures recorded at the wage census of 1916. The statement showing daily rural wages taken during the wage-census of 1916 and 1924 was as follows :—

> In 1916 unskilled labourer when paid in cash earned daily annas 3¼ as against annas 4½ in 1924 and in kind 1½ seers and 3 seers respectively. The skilled blacksmiths earned 4 annas and 6 pies in 1916 as against 8 annas and 9 pies in 1924, carpenters 4 annas and 6 pies in 1916 as against 10 annas and 3 pies in 1924, *gharmia* 5 annas in 1916 as against 8 annas and 6 pies in 1924. and ploughmen get 2 annas and 9 pies in 1916 as against 4 annas and 6 pies in 1924.

From 1930 to 1945 that is up to the close of the Second World War the level of wages practically remained stationary though the level of price after 1942 as mentioned before showed an upward tendency. The soaring prices of food crops after 1945 did not affect the agricultural labourers adversely as they were generally paid in kind. After 1945 the wages of both skilled and unskilled labourers began to rise

and practically doubled. The figures of wages as mentioned in the *Bihar Statistical Hand-book,* 1954, are given below :—

Skilled Labourers.

		Rs.	a.	p.
Carpenters—				
1953	.. .. ..	2	8	0
1954	.. .. ..	2	7	8
1955	.. .. ..	2	3	8
Blacksmiths—				
1953	.. .. ..	2	8	0
1954	.. .. ..	2	0	9
1955	.. .. ..	1	15	8

Field Labourers.

		Rs.	a.	p.
Men—				
1953	.. .. ..	1	7	7
1954	.. .. ..	1	4	0
1955	.. .. ..	1	1	8
Women—				
1953	.. .. ..	0	14	11
1954	.. .. ..	0	11	1
1955	.. .. ..	0	9	2
Children—				
1953	.. .. ..	0	13	4
1954	.. .. ..	0	11	1
1955	.. .. ..	0	9	0

Supply of labour.—The cultivation of the *bhadai, aghani* and *rabi* crops affords almost continuous work to labourers from about the end of May when *tarani* or the preparation of the land for *bhadai* crops begins, until the end of October. From the beginning of November and December labourers subsist on the produce of their own *bhadai* fields and on earnings by working on others' farm. During the next 2¼ months they earn by cutting paddy. At this time there is an exodus of labourers in search of employment and returning for the agricultural operations which commence with the break of the monsoon. Running into debts at a high interest is common at this time. The *mahajan* deducts 5 per cent of the principal at the time of making loan towards the first interest or makes a short payment which the borrower has got to accept.

The District Gazetteer, published in 1930 mentions that "In 1906 an enquiry was held into the labour supply of Bengal and it was then ascertained that Saran was the first district in the then province of Bengal to reach the point when it could not maintain its population. The people of Saran appeared to be well aware of the benefits to be derived from employment in industrial centres and

then, as now, a longer number than from most of other districts sought employment in those centres spontaneously". The seasonal migration still affords some relief to the labourers of the district.

The wages of village artisans and of field labourers are, however, generally paid in kind and at the time of harvesting and threshing, the labourers are given one bundle out of 21 bundles cut and one *passeri* (5 seers) out of every 21 *passeries* threshed. For threshing, as also often for ploughing, the cultivators adopt mutual aid, one man lending his bullocks one day and getting his neighbour's the next. So far as the village washermen and barbers and potters are concerned they are also paid in kind during the period of harvesting. So far as the washermen are concerned they usually receive standing crops of 5 *dhurs* of land at the period of harvesting with a long *laggi* of 12 *haths* (cubits) which is equivalent to one *katha* per adult female member of the family. The village barbers also get the same amount of land per adult male member of the family. The wages of the potters underwent a great change as they generally get cash for their earthenware. During ceremonial occasions like the sacred thread ceremony or *sradh* they generally get 20 seers grains along with fooding and clothing.

Agricultural Labourers.

There is no doubt that the agricultural labourer has received very small attention in comparison to the industrial labourer in Bihar. This district is no exception. But this is not peculiar to the State of Bihar alone but is general for the different States in the Indian Union.

An Agricultural Labour Enquiry was undertaken in 1949 by the Ministry of Labour, Government of India. The enquiry was conducted in 806 villages of the Indian Union selected on a stratified random sampling basis, leaving out only the villages with a population of less than 100 persons. Eighty of the villages selected were from Bihar. It will be of interest to note that the enquiry was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, each sampled village was surveyed with respect to population, number and classification of families, land utilisation, yield of crops, livestock, etc. In the second stage, about 50 per cent of the agricultural families randomly selected in each sampled village was subjected to scrutiny in respect of certain characters, such as, income, employment, consumption, expenditure, indebtedness, etc. An agricultural labour family was taken to be one where either the head of the family or 50 per cent or more of the earners reported wage paid or hired agricultural labourer as their main occupation, that is, the occupation in which they were engaged for 50 per cent or more of the total number of days worked by them during the previous year. The data collected in the intensive family survey related to the year from March, 1950 to February, 1951. The population census of 1951, it may be mentioned here, roughly synchronised with the Agricultural Labour Enquiry.

Some tentative conclusions could be drawn as to how the agricultural labour in Bihar fares from the data thrown up by the survey of the 80 villages in Bihar. The area of the 80 villages was 49,120 acres (of which 7,171 acres were not taken note of as they belonged to persons residing outside the sampled villages) and a population of 52,471 persons comprised in 9,556 families, of which 1,228 families of agricultural labourer were intensively surveyed.

These conclusions could apply to the villages in this district generally. From the data collected in the enquiry the village area comes to 614 acres, the village population is 656 persons, the village density of population per square mile is 684 and the average number of persons per family is 5.5. These features are almost at par with the data thrown out by the village population census of 1951. According to the population census the village area per village is 626 acres, the village population 526 persons, the village density of population 537 persons and the average number of persons per family is 5.2. Excepting for Chotanagpur area the data could almost be said to be of one pattern for the normal villages in North and South Bihar.

According to the population census agriculturists with their dependents constitute in the rural area 90.6 per cent of the population as against 81.1 per cent shown by the Agricultural Labour Enquiry in 1949. Non-cultivating owners and non-cultivating tenants together constitute 1.5 per cent of the families according to the A. L. Enquiry but only 0.55 per cent according to the population census. The most remarkable difference is however in respect of the proportion of cultivators of owned and unowned lands. Thus while cultivators of owned lands constitute 3.7 per cent and the cultivators of un-owned lands formed 31.1 per cent of the total families according to the A. L. Enquiry of 1949, they with their dependents constitute 58.5 and 8.9 per cent respectively of the total population according to the population census in 1951. The reasons for this difference in the two sets of figures are to be found mainly in the differences in the definition of ownership of land adopted for the purposes of the census and the sample survey. According to the A. L. Enquiry, owners were those who held land directly from Government and who had either proprietary right in the land or who were crown tenants or guarantees or who were mortgagers with possession of proprietary rights while the census definition of owners covered all those who held lands on any tenure which carried with it the right of permanent occupancy for purposes of cultivation.

Families of agricultural labourers form 37.8 per cent of the total families according to the A. L. Enquiry while according to the population census they form only 22.9 per cent of the total rural population of Bihar. A. L. Enquiry data make out that about 61 per cent of the agricultural labourers cultivate some lands on their own account. The non-agricultural families according to A. L. Enquiry

form 18.9 per cent of the total rural population, to whom traders cover 3.9 per cent; according to the census figures the non-agriculturists with their dependents form 9.4 per cent of the rural population, of whom persons engaged in commerce form with their dependents 2.3 per cent.

The A. L. Enquiry also indicate that the size of the family depends roughly on its economic status. The average size of the family among land-owners was found to be 6.8—it was 6.2 among tenants, 5.4 among agricultural labourers with land and 4.3 per cent among agricultural labourers without lands. This, however, militates against the popular idea that the more destitute a person is, the more children he has.

The A. L. Enquiry showed that the average size of holdings for Bihar was 4.1 acres as against 7.5 acres for all-India, 13.9 acres in Madhya Pradesh and 29.6 acres in Saurashtra. While the average overall size of the holdings in Bihar worked out at 4.1 acres, it was 12.0 acres for land-owners' holdings, 5.6 acres for tenants' holdings, 1.6 acres for the holdings of agricultural labourers with land and 2.1 acres for the holdings of non-agricultural families. The percentage distribution of the holdings in Bihar according to their size worked out as follows :—

Size of the holdings.	No.	Acre.
	Percentage.	
One acre and less	31.0	3.6
Above one acre but not above 2.5 acres	25.5	10.3
Above 2.5 acres but not above 5.0 acres	20.5	17.9
Above 5.0 acres but not above 10.0 acres	14.3	24.2
Above 10.0 acres but not above 25 acres	7.1	24.9
Above 25 acres but not above 50 acres	1.1	8.6
Above 50 acres	0.5	10.5

Information on employment and unemployment among agricultural labourers was also collected by the A. L. Enquiry. Of the total hired agricultural labour force in India, men formed 55 per cent, women 40 per cent and child labour (under 15) 5 per cent. The child labour was drawn from the age-group of 10—15 years. The quantum of employment varied greatly between attached and casual labourers. While the attached labourers form 15 per cent and casual labourers 85 per cent of the total all-India labour force, in Bihar their proportions were 22.4 per cent and 77.6 per cent respectively. In Bihar adult male agricultural labourers found paid employment on an average for 200 days in the year while the adult woman agricultural labour found employment on wages for only 110 days in the year.

Non-agricultural work consisted mainly of odd jobs. A small part of the employment of the agricultural labourers was for non-agricultural work. Non-agricultural work consisted mainly of casual engagements like carrying loads, repairing and building of houses, driving carts or rickshaws and employment on public works, etc. The scope of employment in non-agricultural work was rather limited. For a portion of the year the agricultural labourers were either unemployed or self-employed. It has also to be noted that the employment available to the agricultural labourers showed considerable variation from year to year depending on weather conditions and other natural phenomena. If it is a particularly bad year for agricultural purposes there will be much lesser chance of employment in the fields. That is why it is necessary for the State to employ the unemployed agricultural labourers in works of public utility, for example, making roads, excavating tanks, reclaiming lands, cutting jungles, putting embankments to avoid the prospect of a large unemployed population in times of scarcity.

As mentioned before an average agricultural labourer's family consists of 4.5 persons out of which about 50 per cent are earners. Earning daily wages is the normal rule for both the casual and attached workers. Payment in kind is slightly predominating over cash payment. 53.2 per cent of the man-days of employment of agricultural labour was paid for in kind, 41.0 per cent in cash and 3.3 per cent in cash and kind. Regarding the actual wages the average daily wage of a man in agricultural operations worked out roughly at Rs. 2.02 nP. and of woman at Rs. 1.75 nP. On the average it may be said, that the normal rate now (1959) is Rs. 1.50 nP. to Rs. 2 for an adult male and Re 1 to Rs. 1.25 nP. for an adult female. The wages for harvesting are higher than the wages for broadcasting or sowing of seeds or for weeding operations. The wages are obviously determined by demand and supply and the urgency for reaping the crops.

The average annual family income of an agricultural labour family in Bihar in 1950-51 was found to be Rs. 534. The average annual consumption expenditure was estimated at Rs. 574. There was a 7.5 per cent expenditure in excess of the income. An analysis of the expenditure of the average agricultural labour family indicates that food consumed was 89.9 per cent of the total expenditure as against 63.6 per cent of the total expenditure in an urban industrial family. Clothing and foot-wear meant only 4.5 per cent of the expenditure for an agricultural labour family as against 13.0 of an urban industrial family. For the items (1) fuel and lighting, (2) house rent, repairs, and (3) miscellaneous, the agricultural labour family spends 0.9, 0.9 and 3.8 per cent of the expenditure as against 4.1, 3.5 and 15.8 per cent, respectively in an urban industrial family. This picture shows the much poorer condition of the agricultural labourer in comparison to the urban industrial labourer. As much as 90 per cent of the total expenditure of the agricultural labour was on food alone

and he had practically very little to spend on other basic necessities like clothing, housing, lighting, etc. For 4.5 persons in an agricultural family an allowance of only Rs. 20 per year for clothing is indeed a very poor compensation. His miscellaneous expenditure consists of items like ceremonials, tobacco, *pan* and liquor. An agricultural labourer spends practically nothing on housing or fuel and that shows the poverty of the agricultural labourer. His house in 55 per cent cases consists of one room and in 25 per cent of two rooms and the condition of the room is extremely poor with practically no amenities.

An analysis of the food consumption in an agricultural labour family shows that their dietary was extremely deficient in the caloric intake to the extent of 25 per cent of the normal daily requirement of 3,000 calories.

Regarding indebtedness, the A. L. Enquiry indicated that 41.8 per cent of the agricultural labour families in Bihar were in debt. The total indebtedness among all the agricultural labour families in Bihar could be estimated at Rs. 10.6 crores as against Rs. 80 crores for the Indian Union. The Enquiry also revealed that although fewer families of agricultural labourers who had some land were indebted than the families who had no lands at all yet the average size of debt per indebted family was considerably higher in the former class than among the latter. By far the major part of the debt was incurred for consumption and ceremonial expenditure. The biggest single source of borrowing was the village money-lenders, the share of co-operative society being only about one per cent.

Standard of Living.

Regarding material condition of the people the last District Gazetteer (1930) mentions that " At the time of the Cadastral Survey elaborate enquiries were made into the condition of the people and the profits of agriculture. It was estimated that the average family consisted of five persons whom it cost in all Rs. 75 a year to maintain in moderate comfort, and that a holding of 2½ acres was the minimum that would suffice for this maintenance. It was also found that the average size of the holding of the family of pure cultivators was 3.8 acres. Cultivators with less than this and the landless labourers were always struggling and probably unable even to save. But this was also noted that even in the great famine of 1896-97 this class displayed more staying power than might have been expected and though they formed 20 per cent of the population, the largest number of persons relieved in any one day during that famine was only 6 per cent of the population of the affected areas ".

The abovementioned findings of the cadastral survey in course of more than five decades had more or less become obsolete. The estimate of family expenditure given there has increased tremendously in the present fast-changing world. The average size of holding

of the family of pure cultivator shown in the cadastral survey was 3.8 acres but due to unscientific fragmentation of the land the size of holding has much reduced which will be evident from the statistics given below :—

Distribution of 1,000 agricultural holdings by size of holdings.

(Based on sample survey of size of holdings, 1952.)

Up to 0.5 acre	411
Exceeding 0.5 acre and up to one acre	176
Exceeding 2 acres and up to 3 acres	93
Exceeding 3 acres and up to 4 acres	52
Exceeding 4 acres and up to 5 acres	25
Exceeding 5 acres and up to 10 acres	43
Exceeding 10 acres and up to 15 acres	1
Exceeding 15 acres and up to 30 acres	5
Exceeding 30 acres and up to 50 acres	1
Exceeding 50 acres	*Nil.*

According to this sample survey the average size of the majority holdings is only 0.5 acre and only about 10 per cent and 5.2 per cent holdings constitute exceeding 2 and up to 3 acres and exceeding 3 and up to 4 acres, respectively. Though the figures of the sample survey cannot be fully relied upon, they have their value. According to the estimation of the cadastral survey 84 per cent of the population were dependent on agriculture, out of which 64 per cent of the population were pure cultivators and 20 per cent labourers. The total number of cultivators was 15,41,694 and labourers 4,81,779. The total area held by *raiyats* (including rent-free tenants) was 12,32,545 acres out of which 11,84,545 acres were with the pure cultivators and according to the average size of holding of a family of five persons of the pure cultivators group was 3.8 acres. There cannot be any firm conclusion on these figures nor can the figures particularly those of the Sample Survey be taken too seriously.

Regarding material condition of the cultivators the last District Gazetteer of 1930 mentions as follows :—

> "The estimate of family expenditure given here can no longer be regarded as accurate but it is probable that the pure cultivator is better off now. He gets at least twice as much money for his surplus produce if he sells it; the general cost of living has, no doubt, increased but there has not been a proportionate increase in wages paid in kind and most of the services which a cultivator has to purchase are paid."

This observation still holds good to some extent. But it has to be borne in mind that there are various factors which contribute towards standard of living. The standard of living mainly depends on the economic status of the person concerned. The standard of living of the zamindars and big agriculturists is comparatively fairly

high. By the abolition of zamindari the class of zamindars are now reduced to the status of the big cultivators. The zamindars who did not have large quantities of *bakast* land have come to the category of the middle class people. The petty zamindars are distinctly worse off.

After deduction of the number of the big cultivators there remains more than 20 lakhs of population under cultivators of land, wholly or mainly owned and their dependents. These people constitute the middle class and they are the backbone of the district. Agriculture which is the main source of livelihood is unable to cope with the rise in the population and that is why the standard of living of middle class agriculturists is low. From the study of some family budgets it was found that 65 per cent or more of the income is spent on food and even then the food is neither sufficient nor balanced for the average family unit.

The lot of the landless labourers is rather depressing. The number of cultivating labourers and their dependents in the census of 1951 was 4,27,264. As stated before the landless labourers are always struggling for existence and probably unable ever to save. In the normal season agriculture affords employment to them for eight to nine months and for the rest of the year they are in search of employment. The wages of these agricultural labourers as mentioned before have increased from two annas in 1901 to Rs. 1-7-0 in 1953. But the value of money, in course of the last five decades has fallen tremendously. The landless labourers are now partially engaged in pulling rickshaw, taking up jobs as *chaukidars* or peons and such other jobs.

The standard of living of upper class people with higher income in the urban area is high. But their number in the district is negligible. The standard of living of the middle class and the lower middle class men in the urban areas could be described to be worse than that of those in the rural areas. Housing difficulties, high rent and increased cost of living make their condition difficult. The rental that the average middle class and the lower middle class men have to pay in a month takes about one-fifth of their income or even more. After spending money on other necessities of life such as education, medicine, conveyance charge, etc., they are left with a very small margin to fall back on at the time of adversity.

The service-holder with an average income of about Rs. 100 per month with an average family of four to five persons can only with considerable self-denial reach a balance between the income and expenditure. The result is that in case of prolonged illness or due to social commitments like marriage or *sradha* there is always the need for a loan to be contracted. It is only in case of regulated life, family planning and a subsidiary income by any other member of the family that there could be a certain amount of balance to fall back on. This is also one of the basic reasons for the incidence of corruption among service-holders.

It is interesting to mention that the lot of the class IV officers of the Government and their counterparts in business concerns are not as badly off in the urban area as they are expected to be. With the recent increase in the house allowance they earn about Rs. 50 per month. They usually supplement their income by doing some work in the morning and evening. Their demand for the necessities of life is less than the ministerial officers. So also the artisans, mechanics and labourers in the urban areas are much better off than the lower-paid clerks and other assistants in the Government or business offices if an overall picture of the two groups is compared.

ARTICLES OF CONSUMPTION AND FAMILY BUDGETS.

Regarding the articles of consumption and family budgets of the well-to-do, the middle and lower classes, both in urban and rural areas, it has to be observed that without a detailed economic survey any definite conclusions would be hazardous. Observations in a general way about the budget of the family unit of different types have already been made. Briefly it may be said that expenditure on the bare necessities for animal existence, food and cloth consumption takes away the bulk of the family budget of the lower and the middle classes both in urban and rural areas. It is only the well-to-do persons who can maintain a certain level of comfort. The middle class family of higher income-group may be said to be living in some comfort. The modern standard of comfortable living with a well-spaced house with amenities, adequate and well-balanced diet, a certain amount of recreational comforts, ample or just necessary monetary balance to fall back on at times of illness or distress cannot be applied to the middle or the lower classes in the district. Possession of a conveyance, amenities like consumption of electricity, etc., which are no longer computed to be as luxury items according to western standard could only apply to the well-to-do. But the well-to-do class also stands at a cross-road now. The various impositions of new taxes which are necessary for building up a Welfare State cannot leave the well-to-do at their present vantage point much longer. The State is naturally anxious to bring in a socialistic pattern and to plug the leakages in the taxation structure. As mentioned before the abolition of zamindari has done away with a comfortable and probably slightly pampered class that had been outgrowing their utility. The erst-while zamindars and their children will now have to rough out their existence along with the other classes. This has led to a slight population shift from agriculture to industry. Saran is bound to continue her main agricultural economy for a pretty long time but the trends are that if industrial opportunities are created there will be no allergy in the people to shift to industry. Till now the population shift from agriculture to industry or from one industry to another is rather feeble. It is difficult to foresee a reasonable quick radical change in the set-up of the present family budget of the well-to-do, the middle and lower classes, either in urban and rural areas. With the slashing down of the value of

money and more availability of consumer goods, the tendency will be towards a certain amount of upgrading in the level of life but the old idea of leaving a sizable balance for the progeny will have to go. There is a vast field for utilising the unemployed and under-employed human resources in the rural areas. There is, no doubt, a very sizable population, either idle or semi-idle in the towns and the villages and they require to be better employed. A mere food production programme cannot possibly, as mentioned before, absorb this untapped surplus human population. In the rural areas the farmers have not got an ensured market within bullock carts' distance. They are also denied a guaranteed price for their produce of the field and there are very small immediate provision of suitable local storage facilities. So there could be very little of upgrading of their own consumption level. In the urban areas also the same high incidence of unemployment is seen. The vast surplus of educated or semi-educated in the towns are competing for white-collared jobs which can hardly make them live with family in bare comforts. A mixed economy and a slant towards industrialisation may bring in better results.

This is unfortunately the position in spite of the fact that a large scale emigration is a general feature of the district. The total amount of money-orders paid within the district in 1955-56 was Rs. 3,00,29,231 as against Rs. 5.26,64,774 in 1956-57.

Employment Exchange.

The statistics of registration and employment through the Employment Exchange is a good index of the economic trends. The Employment Exchange at the headquarters of Chapra could not be said to be as popular as it might have been. Help of the Employment Exchange is not invariably sought while filling up vacancies in private and public sector. Set-up as an Employment Information Bureau in 1945 at the instance of Government of India, the section was raised to the status of a District Employment Exchange in 1949. In 1956 it was transferred to the State Government. The following are the statistics supplied by the Employment Exchange for the years 1953 to 1957 :—

		Vacancies notified.				Vacancies filled.			
Year.	Registration.	C. G.	S. G.	Other.	Total.	C. G.	S. G.	Other.	Total.
1953	6520	1,002	113	166	1,281	849	16	128	993
1954	7255	744	330	50	1,124	607	99	12	718
1955	4490	514	150	96	760	506	68	10	584
1956	4626	409	300	39	748	279	145	9	433
1957	5140	290	188	52	530	154	68	5	227

The figures do not show that the Employment Exchange has been able to fill up the vacuum to any great extent.

Miscellaneous Occupations.

In a discussion on the economic trends it is necessary to make a brief mention of the employment of the people of the district in professions which could be lumped under "Miscellaneous Occupations". From percentage basis such employed persons form a very small quota. They, however, with their background of education, technical skill or special role that they fill up in the economic structure play an important role.

Public Administration.

The total number of persons engaged in health, education and public administration according to the census of 1951 comes to 7,260 males and 361 females. The break-up figures are as follows :—

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
(1) Medical and other Health Services—		
Employers	6	4
Employees	304	178
Independent workers	676	104
Total ..	986	286
(2) Educational Services and Research—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	1,380	63
Independent workers	8	12
Total ..	1,388	75
(3) Army, Navy and Air Force—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	160	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	160	..
(4) Police (other than village watchmen)—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	953	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	953	..

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
(5) Village officers and servants including village watchmen—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	240	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	240	..
(6) Employees of Municipalities and Local Boards—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	450	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	450	..
(7) Employees of the State Government—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	3,003	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	3,003	..
(8) Employees of the Union Government—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	18	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	18	..
(9) Employees of non-Indian Government—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	12	..
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	12	..

The statistics as they stand show a very small number of women in such employments. The number of the employees of the Union Government in Saran is shown only as 18. It is not known where these 18 persons are employed. The number of the postal and railway employees have been indicated in the Chapter on Communication.

The persons employed in public administration get some amenities, such as free medical facilities and in some cases living quarters. The percentage of Government employees with allotment

of houses is extremely small. Housing is a great problem and many have to spend almost one-fifth to one-fourth of their emoluments for house rent. The public employees and particularly non-gazetted, ministerial officers and Class IV Government employees have their separate associations for ventilation of their grievances. The associations do not comprise the different services but are for particular services only.

Learned Professions.

Persons included in this group belong to various smaller groups which are quite distinct from one another. There are authors, journalists. sculptors, architects, photographers, musicians, actors, dancers, lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers and priests, etc. The *District Census Hand-Book, Saran,* published in 1956 has included them under the services not elsewhere specified. According to the *District Census Hand-Book, Saran,* the number of person engaged in the services not elsewhere specified was 14,350 males and 6,008 females. It also includes domestic services. The break-up figures of persons engaged in the learned professions were as follows :—

Occupations.		Males.	Females.
(1) Recreation services—			
Employers	.. .. ..	7	..
Employees	.. .. ..	65	..
Independent workers	.. ..	209	108
	Total ..	281	108
(2) Legal and business service—			
Employers	.. .. ..	11	..
Employees	.. .. ..	1,276	..
Independent workers	.. ..	513	..
	Total ..	1,800	..
(3) Arts, letters and journalism—			
Employers	.. .. ..	2	..
Employees	.. .. ..	5	..
Independent workers	.. ..	26	7
	Total ..	33	7
(4) Religious, charitable and welfare services—			
Employers	.. .. ..	5	..
Employees	.. .. ..	98	..
Independent workers	.. ..	766	97
	Total ..	869	97

Law.—An increasing number of persons has been following the profession of law. The profession includes practising lawyers, their clerks, petition writers, etc. The census of 1951 has given the number under legal and business services as 1,800. There are no women in this class. In 1958 the number of advocates and pleaders was 186 and of Mukhtears 40. The influence of the progressive members of this class on the society is very considerable. The lawyers are usually in the forefront of the political and social fields. The Bar has always led public life in Saran and the relationship between the Bench and the Bar has been dignified and helpful to each other.

Arts, letters and journalism.—The number of persons engaged in arts, letters and journalism in 1951 was only 40 out of which 33 were males and 7 females. These professions have not made much headway in recruitment to their folds. The journals are of local importance and have a small circulation.

Religion.—Religion was previously a full time occupation for some and the priests and ministers of religion and religious mendicant, such as *sadhus* and *fakirs* were held in great esteem. This profession has now lost its attraction and is not lucrative. Fewer persons are now exclusively engaged in temples and for acting as a priest during *sradh* and marriage ceremonies. The total number of persons engaged in religious, charitable and welfare services in the census of 1951 was 966 out of which 869 were males and 97 females. This class has lost much of their hold on the society. Many of them are lacking of real knowledge of the *shastras* and lead a mercenary life under the garb of spiritualism.

DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL SERVICES.

Persons engaged in the domestic and personal services according to the census of 1951 were as follows :—

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
(1) Services otherwise unclassified—		
Employers	..	1
Employees	5,651	2,122
Independent workers	..	..
Total ..	5,651	2,123
(2) Domestic services (but not including services rendered by members of family households to one another)—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	1,318	924
Independent workers	227	284
Total ..	1,545	1,208

Occupations.	Males.	Females.
(3) Barbers and beauty shops—		
Employers	..	..
Employees	44	10
Independent workers	10	1,684
Total ..	54	1,694
(4) Laundries and laundry services—		
Employers	25	2
Employees	50	...
Independent workers	2,136	2,085
Total ..	2,211	2,087
(5) Hotels, restaurants and eating houses—		
Employers	11	..
Employees	108	11
Independent workers	113	40
Total ..	232	51

The persons engaged in the domestic services include cook, indoor servant, water carrier, groom, coachman, motor driver and cleaner. From the statistics, it is apparent that a good number of females have also found employment. Out of the total of 2,753 souls 1,208 were found to be women. The abolition of zamindari has affected this class adversely as the zamindars used to maintain a large number of domestic servants in their houses. Regarding domestic servants the old *District Gazetteer, Saran,* published in 1930 has mentioned that " Domestic servants are usually paid about Rs. 4 a month with food and clothing besides ". The wages of the domestic servants are now Rs. 10 to Rs. 12 a month or even more with fooding and clothing. A part-time *dai* or *ayah* is engaged even in the family of low-income group to do odd household work or look after the children. This is normally prevalent in the high caste families. In the rural area the *dais* or maid-servants are paid mostly in kind but in the urban areas they are paid in cash.

Barbers found all over the district used to play a significant role in settling marriage and thereby earned a fair commission. In Hindu families the services of the barbers are required during ceremonial occasions, like marriage, sacred thread, first hair cutting (*mundan*) and funeral rites. In the rural areas they are paid in kind usually half a maund per adult member of the family. In the urban area a barber gets one anna for a shave and four annas for a hair crop. A small number of barbers' saloons are found in Chapra, Siwan,

Gopalganj, Maharajganj, Revelganj, Sonepur and Marhowrah. In most cases the owners are self-workers. The charge of a saloon is two annas per shave and six to eight annas for a hair crop. The barbers are usually Hindus but some Muslims are also engaged in this profession.

Like barbers, washermen are also found all over the district. In the rural areas they are usually paid in kind. Some washermen have opened laundries of somewhat low standard in the towns. Regarding the wages of the washermen A. P. Middleton had mentioned in the last District Gazetteer that "*dhobies* (washermen) are paid 8 annas for 20 articles". But now they charge two rupees or more per 20 pieces for adult's cloth and one rupee for 20 pieces for children.

The hotels and restaurants seen in the towns are of a low standard and in 1951 employed only 232 males and 51 females. They are mostly concentrated in and around the courts. The quality of food service and lodging is very poor. Hygiene is more of casualty in the concerns.

The persons employed consist of owners, paid managers, cooks and unskilled workers like waiters and boys. The owners usually serve the work of managers also. The cooks receive a monthly salary of Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 a month with fooding. The salary of the other servants varies from Rs. 6 to Rs. 15 with fooding. The scale of salary or emoluments is going up.

The hotels and restaurants have their importance as the meeting ground of a large number of men everyday and work as the clearing house for gossips and rumours. Their role in society is not inconsiderable but unfortunately their contribution is more of the negative type being superficial.

The number of tailors is not given in the census of 1951. Their number is fairly large in Chapra and Siwan. All the towns and the thana headquarters have some tailoring shops. The number of tailors is on the increase. This profession is exclusively confined to the males. In Saran the tailors are usually Muslims. The number of skilled tailors does not seem to be very large. The tailoring charge for an ordinary shirt varies from Re. 1 to Rs. 2, while of silken and woollen shirt or bushshirt is from Rs. 3 to Rs. 4. The taloring charge of a suit is much higher. The tailoring of an ordinary suit costs Rs. 7 to Rs. 10 and that of warm suit from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30 or more.

General Economic Condition.

The economic condition of the persons engaged in domestic and personal services vary from group to group. On the whole it may be said the over-all economic condition of a domestic servant, a tailor, a washerman or a barber has very considerably improved in the last two decades. Their wages or earnings have gone up several times. It is to be noted that several members of one family of this class

earn money. Thus a young son of a washerman or a tailor will also be working and earning some money in his father's establishment. Boys as domestic servants are in great demand. Itinerant maid-servants who work at several establishments never go without jobs. Even a sweeper's family consisting of three earning members will be earning more than Rs. 100 a month. Their standard of life has not been upgraded as much as that of an educated or a semi-educated family. All this has created peculiar economic currents in the society. A boy of a cultivator family after some education sticks to the town for a white-collared job which cannot make him live comfortably with his family unless he supplements his income from the field produce. The chance of employment for such men in the urban areas is growing less when compared to the chance of employment open for the professionals, like tailors, barbers, hotel-keepers or sweepers. The rapidly growing index of urbanisation has a very favourable opening for employment for them than to the educated or semi-educated youth. The domestic services personnel have also an elasticity for changing their professions for better employment. For example, any day they can take to the work of rickshaw-puller or driver, motor-driver, cleaner, mason, painter or a manual labourer. Any initiation of industrialisation will at once affect the personnel of these classes.

The statistics discussed in this chapter were thrown out by the Census Operations of 1951. It is expected that there will be considerable changes in employment statistics under public administration in 1961 census. The field of public administration in a Welfare State is much wider. Various economic plans have been undertaken as Development Projects. In order to make the Second Five-Year Plan a success the countryside is being covered by the Community Development Projects and National Extension Service Blocks. These centres will require a great army of both technical and non-technical personnel.

Briefly speaking the National Extension Service and Community Development Administration conceived at the end of 1952 has been the most remarkable feature in the rural development administration since Independence in 1947. The future of the countryside is linked up with the implementation of this programme. The administration has been given a new outlook and the village has been definitely put on the administrative map. On the organisational side, the great achievement of the National Extension Service was that it took the development programme and its administration right to the village. The *raiyat* at his village is expected to get the services of a trained animal husbandry man and experts on medicine, agriculture, co-operation and industry. The idea is to create an integrated development administration at the block level.

The whole of Saran district is being covered gradually by the blocks. Simultaneously the Village Panchayats are being organised to function as units of self-Government. The rejuvenation of village

administration through these channels can only be possible if there are suitable Block Development Officers, Agricultural Extension Officers, Animal Husbandry Extension Officers, Industrial Extension Officers, Co-operation Extension Officers, Male and Female Social Education Organisers, Progress Assistants, Village Level Workers, *Gram Sevikas,* Medical Officers, Compounders, Sanitary Inspectors, Lady Health Visitors, Midwives and Overseers. Overnight the large array of officers required cannot be found. Necessarily for training this army of workers, a large number of Extension Training Centres, etc., Basic Training Centres and Integrated Course Training Centres have been started in the State and beyond.

The changed set up of the Revenue Administration will also require a large number of *Karamcharis* and other personnel. The scheme of land reforms in India is closely associated with the promotion of co-operative farming. The extension of co-operative farming will also need a trained personnel.

This enormous expansion in the scope of State activities since 1951 census has naturally brought in a much larger number of people in employment or directly associated with the public administration. They have not yet been properly enumerated. Their number is growing rapidly and the next census in 1961 will give us an idea of their number. Apart from the percentage of these men in the public administrative sector their impact on society will be very considerable. Besides, the employees in public administration under the State Government, the number of employees in public administration under the Centre is also going up considerably. More Post and Telegraph Offices are being opened and there may be schemes for extension of railway transport, trade, banking and insurance in the public sector. All this will add considerably to the number of persons in public administration, either under the Centre or the State.

CHAPTER IX.
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

Historical Background.

The British stepped in Saran in 1764 after Shuja-ud-daula had been driven from Patna by Major Carnac. In the *Ain-i-Akbari* it was treated as one of the six *Sarkars* forming the *Subah* or province of Bihar. During the reign of Aurangzeb and later Saran was one of the eight *Sarkars* of *Subah* Bihar.* For purposes of revenue administration and collection one *Amalguzar* or revenue collector was in charge of each *Sarkar*. After the grant of *Diwani* of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in August, 1765, the actual collection of revenue was left till 1772 in the hands of the *Naib Diwan* (Shitab Ray). At first the collections were left entirely to native agency called *Nazims* or native collectors, it being doubtful, as the Council remarked "Whether the European servants generally possessed sufficient knowledge of the civil institutions and the interior state of the country to qualify them for the trust". But after four years of this system, it was found necessary to appoint European Supervisors to control the native subordinates in the collection of revenue and the administration of civil justice. In 1770 a Revenue Council was formed for Bihar with its headquarters at Patna for the purpose of supervising the supervisors. In 1772 the office of *Naib Diwan* was abolished and the Company took over the collection of the revenue. The supervisors were called collectors for the first time and placed under the control of a Board of Revenue in Calcutta. The result of the system was disastrous from every point of view. In 1774 the European agency was again abolished and revenue collection was entrusted to *Amils* working under a Provincial Council at Patna. In 1781 the system was again changed and the Provincial Council was abolished. European Collectors were re-appointed in each district but they were mere figureheads.

The scheme was over-centralised and soon broke down. In 1786 a more rational scheme was adopted. The districts were now organised into regular fiscal units, and the Collector in each district was made responsible for settling revenue and collecting it. Since that time the Collector became the pivot of British administration in the district though some minor modifications have been made from time to time.

The changes in the system of revenue administration in 1773, 1781 and 1786 brought about corresponding changes in the administration of justice. In 1772 the *Diwani Adalat* in each district was in charge of the Collector. In 1774 the district courts were placed

* These *Sarkars* were Tirhut, Hajipur, Champaran, Saran, Monghyr, Behar, Rohtas and Shahabad.

in charge of Indian Officers called *Amils*. In 1775 a *Faujdar* was appointed in each district to bring criminals to justice. But the *Faujdari* system of 1775 was abolished in 1781 and the powers and duties of *Faujdars* were transferred to the judges of the district courts. The criminals were, however, tried in *Faujdari* or Indian Courts under Indian Judges. In 1787 the district courts were again placed under the Collectors who were vested with powers of a Magistrate and could try criminal cases with certain limits. The Collectors could not deal with revenue cases, which were transferred to the Board of Revenue. Further changes were introduced in 1790. The experiment of making the Board of Revenue responsible for revenue cases proved a failure, and new local courts were instituted in each district under the Collector for trying these cases. The district criminal courts were abolished and their place was taken by Courts of Circuit.

The famous Cornwallis Code of May, 1793, ushered in a new system in Indian administration. The Collector was divested of all judicial and magisterial powers, which devolved on a new class of officers called Judges. The separate revenue courts were abolished and the Judges tried all civil cases. The net result of the changes introduced by Cornwallis was to divide the entire administration work in a district between European officers, one acting as a Collector of Revenue, and the other as a Judge and Magistrate. Indians were seldom employed in offices involving trust and responsibility.

For a period of thirty-five years the system of Cornwallis was followed. The first radical change in the system of Cornwallis was effected in 1829 by Lord William Bentinck. The new scheme of administration centered round a class of officials called Commissioners, each of whom was placed in charge of a division comprising several districts. The Provincial Courts of Appeal and the posts of Superintendent of Police were abolished in 1829. By the Regulation I of 1829 and a letter, dated the 17th November 1829, from the Council Chamber, to the Magistrate of Saran, gives notice for this and their duties were transferred to the Commissioner. In addition to these, he had to supervise the work of the Collectors, Magistrates and the Judges of the districts under him. Experience, however, soon proved that all the tasks given were far too much for a single individual. As a result of the reshuffling made in 1831 and 1837, the duties of the Sessions Judge were transferred to the District Judge who was relieved of his magisterial functions by the creation of new post for that purpose.

In Saran the Judgeship and Magistracy had been early separated. In the Old Correspondence Volumes for 1832 to 1842, there is a circular no. 362, dated the 26th July 1832, from the Judicial Accounts Officer, Fort William, to the Magistrate of Saran which refers to the expediency of the proposal for separating the accounts of the *Diwani* from those of *Faujdari* Courts. A letter, dated the 23rd

July 1844, was addressed in the name of the Sessions Judge, Saran, by which it is gathered that the post of Sessions Judge for Saran was created probably in 1837. Thus the district administration was carried on by the Judge, the Collector and the Magistrate with assistants, belonging to the covenanted civil service under the supervision of the Divisional Commissioner.

The district of Saran during the period under review was one of the north-western districts of the Patna Division. With the creation of Tirhut Division in 1908 the district was included in the Tirhut Division. In Volume 2 of the Old Correspondence from 1793 to 1836 there is a letter regarding the appointment of Agah Ibrahim Ali Khan as a Deputy Collector in Chapra. He was probably the first Indian Deputy Collector in Saran. His pay was fixed at Rs. 300 per month including Rs. 50 for office establishment. He along with other officers, Europeans or Indians, had to give a declaration that he would not demand any valuables by way of gift, present or otherwise and that he would discharge faithfully the duties of an officer of revenue reposed in by the merchants of the United Kingdom trading in the East Indies. Lord William Bentinck also created the posts of Joint Magistrates and placed them in charge of subdivisions. Gradually Deputy Magistrates were also appointed as subdivisional officers. In Saran the oldest subdivision is Siwan which was created in 1848 and Gopalganj subdivision was created in 1875. The history of the latter period will be evident from the narrative given in the succeeding pages.

Administrative Changes.

In 1790 there were one Magisterial and three Revenue and Civil Courts in *Sarkar* Saran and the same number was found in 1800. In 1850 there were four Magisterial and nine Revenue and Civil Courts; and in 1862 there were eight Magisterial and fifteen Revenue and Civil Courts. Owing to the creation of Champaran into a separate district, the number of Civil and Revenue Courts fell to thirteen in 1869. The number of covenanted officers stationed throughout the year was three in 1790 three in 1800, two in 1850, three in 1862 and four in 1869. It would not be out of place to mention here that after the occupation of Saran in 1764 the *Sarkars* Saran and Champaran were put into a single unit for administrative purpose. The revenue areas of the two districts were not finally separated until 1866, but the magisterial jurisdictions were first divided in 1837, when a Magistrate was stationed at Motihari, the present headquarters of the district of Champaran. On the creation of Tirhut Division in 1908 as mentioned above the Saran district was put in Tirhut Division which comprised all the districts on the north of the Ganga river.

Prior to 1915 when a Sadar Subdivisional Officer was appointed, the District Magistrate was in direct charge of the headquarters

subdivision. In 1930 the sanctioned staff at Chapra was six officers with first class magisterial powers and two with lower powers. There were also special officers, such as Partition Officer and Land Acquisition Deputy Collector, besides permanent officers in charge of the special departments of Excise and Income-tax, the latter of which has been since 1922 directly under the Government of India. The Subdivisional Officers of Siwan and Gopalganj were assisted by either a Deputy Collector or Sub-Deputy Collector.

The main task of the early British administration was the maintenance of law and order and the protection of persons and property. Letter, dated the 20th November 1801, from Patna, to Charles Boddom, Judge and Magistrate of Saran, poses 40 questions which go deep in reviewing the condition of the British administration. The Collector was asked to submit specific answers to these queries to the Hon'ble Vice-President. Some of the questions were very fundamental and wanted information about the incidence of crimes, reasons for increase, if any, if the people were satisfied with the constitution regarding security of their private rights and property against infringement either by the executive officers of Government or even by the supreme authority.

Public administration in the last century consisted mostly in providing security of person and property and raising the revenue necessary for the purpose. The diarchy which was introduced in 1921 after the Montagu Chelmsford Report did not make much change in the public administration though local self-government became a transferred subject. With the gradual liberalisation of the constitution some improvements have been made in the nation-building activities. When Provincial Autonomy took place in 1937, the new Government attempted not only to expand the nation-building departments but also to create a welfare state by paying attention to the well-being of the lower income-groups and the backward classes in society. After the close of the Second World War in 1945, formation of Interim Government in 1946 and the attainment of Independence in 1947, an all-out effort is being made by the national Government to promote the welfare of the citizens and to build up a socially directed economy. Therefore, now the activities of Government require a much more elaborate administrative system than what was felt during the alien Government.

THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE AND HIS OFFICE.

The District Magistrate from the very beginning of the present set-up of the administration in the district and from the days of British rule was treated as the very pivot of the set-up. At first a promoted 'writer', later a covenanted hand and then a member of the Indian Civil Service or the Provincial Civil Service, the District Magistrate who was also the Collector was the officer who counted most. There was a time when the District Magistrate not only looked after the general administration, law and order but also

the post offices and the hospitals. For a long time he was the Chairman of the District Board and looked after the roads, rural sanitation and health, village education and arboriculture. He was, at one time, the Superintendent of Police as well. With the growing complexity of administration there have been ramifications and special officers for some of the administrative departments were appointed. Thus the District Magistrate came to be helped by a gazetted Superintendent of Excise for the administration of Excise affairs, a Superintendent of Police for running the police administration, a District Sub-Registrar for the registration of documents, a Superintendent of Jail for running the day-to-day jail administration, a Civil Surgeon to run the medical departments, etc. He was given a number of gazetted officers who were magistrates of various ranks for running the core of the administration. They were also Revenue Officers and as such designated as Deputy Collectors. These officers used to be vested with magisterial and revenue powers by publication of notifications in the Official Gazette.

Even with the creation of posts for high-powered officers like the Superintendent of Police or the Subdivisional Officers in charge of subdivisions, to whom considerable devolution of powers was made, the overall administrative supervision and responsibility remained with the District Magistrate. It was the District Magistrate who was the invariable link with the State. He was to implement the State policy in every branch in the district. He was accountable to the Government for bad administration. If there was a riot or a wave of lawlessness it was the District Magistrate who had to explain to his higher authorities and to see that normal conditions were restored. If there was an outbreak of cholera causing a heavy toll of human life or an epidemic of foot and mouth diseases causing a heavy cattle mortality it was for the District Magistrate to look for the cause and to do the needful. Quelling of communal disturbances combined with distribution of prizes in schools at a remote corner of his district occupied the District Magistrate's programme. This multifarious work of the District Magistrate went on multiplying but the District Magistrate's Office known as the Collectorate retained almost the same pattern as had been evolved when the work was much less and there was more of executive work for the District Magistrate and Collector and his staff.

Another duty of the District Magistrate was to hear criminal cases and to decide them. Usually the District Magistrate heard appeals from the Second and Third Class Magistrates and the revenue appeals. He could also try important original cases, both criminal and revenue. When work multiplied the District Magistrate's original criminal or revenue work had to be given up and the criminal appellate work was delegated to a Senior Deputy Magistrate who was vested with appellate powers. But the appellate revenue work of the District Magistrate was sought to be retained by most of the District Magistrates till 1950 or so.

With the development of public opinion the District Boards were made independent bodies but the District Magistrate had still certain responsibilities to see that the Board was functioning properly. Many of the District Officer's departments like Excise, Co-operative, Jails, etc., were made into separate departments at Secretariat level and the local officers at district level for that department was put under his departmental boss as well. Thus an Excise Superintendent had to work under the District Magistrate directly but he was also put under a Deputy Commissioner of Excise at the Division and the Commissioner of Excise at Government headquarters. After Independence was achieved in 1947, the character of the administration has been undergoing a great change. Briefly, the State has assumed the role of a Welfare State. More and more development work and projects were introduced. More agrarian reforms came in adding to the work of the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate's functions as the Collector went on rapidly multiplying. A large number of District Councils for Education, Sanitation, Small Savings Drive, Irrigation, etc., came to be formed. The District Magistrate was invariably the head of all these District Councils. An example may be given. An accent was put on spreading private irrigation work and a large number of minor and medium irrigation projects were taken up within the district and the State Government put by a large sum of money for this. The villagers had to bear a share of the expenditure. The people's share either in money or in kind as well as the completed work had to be checked by the District Officer or his Deputy. A large number of ameliorative rent-laws like Rent Reduction, Cess Commutation, *Bakast* Restoration were passed. The result was that the officers had to do a lot of field work. The changed set-up of agrarian laws culminated in the abolition of zamindaries by an Act in 1950. The zamindary abolition was a very big step revolutionary in character as it did away an institution over a century old that had dominated almost every aspect of rural life. There had been no Survey and Settlement Operations in the districts for several decades. The land records were not up-to-date and this created a great problem to the Collector and his officers. All these changes necessitated addition to offices and every district was given an Additional Collector with a large staff. The subordinate staff was recruited hurriedly and mostly lacked revenue experience. The attitude of the outgoing landlords was not helpful and generally non-co-operative.

Side by side there was a change going on in the judicial function of the Magistrates. The judiciary has always been presided over by the District and Sessions Judge. Under him there were the Additional or Assistant Sessions Judges. Civil cases were decided by the District Judge, Additional Judges, Sub-Judges and the Munsifs. But the Deputy Magistrates were Magistrates first (for maintenance of peace, law and order), Executive Officers second and judicial courts last. They combined both judicial and executive functions. To

give an example, the Subdivisional Officer had to receive police reports, control incidence of crime and he was expected to acquire an intimate knowledge of the trend of crime in his subdivision. He had to cultivate a workable knowledge.

When there was an apprehension of a breach of the peace he was expected to take preventive measures on the report of the police or *suo moto* and when the police gave a charge-sheet or wanted proceedings under any of the preventive sections, the self-same Magistrate had to take action and probably keep the case in his own file or transfer to a court subordinate to him in the executive functions. This was, no doubt, an anomalous position and the detachment which is expected of a judicial court was non-existent. But it must be said to the very great credit of the Magistrates that as a class they discharged their responsibilities satisfactorily. This was probably due partially to the character, integrity and the training of the Magistrates and secondly because they were subordinate in their criminal powers to the District and Sessions Judge and ultimately to the High Court.

The move for the separation of judiciary and executive was quite appropriate and reflected the growing consciousness of the public that this anomalous position should be ended. The experiment of separating the judiciary and the executive had started in some districts in the forties and at the beginning some Munsifs and Sub-Judges were given magisterial powers and cases which particularly involved the executive administration of the district used to be transferred to the Munsif-Magistrates or Sub-Judge-Magistrates. For some years after 1948 in the same districts there were some Deputy Magistrates trying criminal cases and some Munsif-Magistrates tried the same type of criminal cases. Later in the late fifties a few Magistrates were diverted fully to the judicial side in some districts. They are now known as the Judicial Magistrates and they are absolutely under the administrative control of the District Judge and the Patna High Court. Saran district is one of those districts where a complete separation of the judiciary and executive has been done.

As is well known every district is divided into several units known as the subdivision. The Subdivisional Officer is the executive head of the subdivision. His headquarters are within his subdivision. He holds in him the same type of functions and responsibilities as a District Magistrate but under the administrative control of the District Magistrate. The Subdivisional Magistrate is also a Deputy to the Collector in revenue matters. Thus the District Magistrate and Collector was at the administrative head of the district with his Deputies, firstly a number of Joint Magistrates, Assistant Magistrates, Deputy Magistrates and Deputy Collectors at the district headquarters and secondly the Subdivisional Officers and a number of officers at the subdivisions combining the magisterial and revenue work and he had the further assistance of officers in charge of specialised

departments like Excise, Registration, Medical and Public Health, etc., at headquarters with their subordinates at the lower level. With the dwindling of the European members of the Indian Civil Service in 1947 by their wholesale retirement by the Government, there was a vacuum in the rank of the top and experienced officers. After Independence the Indian Civil Service was replaced by a service known as the Indian Administrative Service. This service was filled up by promotion from the Provincial Civil Service, and recruitment from the market by selection and open competitive examinations. There were also emergency recruitments by interview only.

As mentioned before the office of the District Magistrate known as the Collectorate had continued the same type of pattern from almost the beginning of the district administration under the British rule. A detailed study of the district and subdivisional offices which included the recommendations regarding the standard of staffing and the organisation to be adopted for the Collectorate and subdivisional offices was done in 1905 by a committee known as the Slacke Committee. This committee was set up to draw a comprehensive scheme, scheme for improving the position of the ministerial officers. The pattern that was set up followed the needs at that time. The English Office in the Collectorate was the clearing house of the District Magistrate's administration and every letter went to the English Office and had to be treated in the various departments concerned but under the control of the English Office. Apart from the confidential section there were separate criminal and revenue departments and the Office Superintendent was at the head of the ministerial officers. Each of the departments in the Collectorate like English Office, Establishment, *Nazarat*, Tauji and Cess, Land Registration, Treasury, etc., was put under a Deputy or a Sub-Deputy Collector or an Assistant Magistrate or a Joint Magistrate who belonged to the Indian Civil Service. The Establishment was technically under a Deputy Collector and under him the head of the ministerial establishment, namely, the Office Superintendent, ran this section.

It has to be remembered that practically every Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector at the district headquarters was burdened with criminal cases and other multifarious duties. The Revenue Departments under them did not receive as much attention as their importance indicated. Thus the *Nazarat* or the Tauji or Cess Section which deals with monetary transactions running to even lakhs of rupees in some months was left to a non-gazetted ministerial officer. The magistrate incharge could not devote much time to see to the day-to-day working of his department or to carry out the instructions. He had hardly time to see that he was signing. This sort of lack of attention had its repercussions. The Manuals or Codes for the various departments were compiled decades before and laid down quite a fool-proof arrangement involving regular inspections, cross checks and periodical transfers of the ministerial head

and the Deputy Collector incharge. The District Magistrate or the Magistrate incharge did not have much time to make thorough inspections as before. The fresh set of officers were not given as elaborate training as before in the departments.

With the emergency on the wake of the Second Great War various price control measures had to be enforced. Cloth, kerosine oil, sugar, medicines, consumers' goods and various other necessary commodities had to be controlled. Very difficult problem of supply had arisen and had to be tackled at the Government level and the districts were also called upon to share the burden. The Deputy Magistrates had to take up the role of a trader, a shop-keeper, and a godown superintendent. They did not have the training for all this work. Overnight a Sub-Deputy Magistrate with a small pay of Rs. 200 per month found himself changed into a Price Control Officer or a District Supply Officer controlling transactions of lakhs of rupees. The original strength of the ministerial officers could not cope with the great pressure of work and quickly large temporary recruitments had to be made. The temporary recruits knew very well that their establishments might not last for a long time. They had very big temptations before them and it should be no wonder if a certain degree of corruption and demoralisation of the administrative machinery had crept in. If a man was picked up on a pay of Rs. 100 per month and was put in charge of a Government godown where grains worth lakhs of rupees were stored or a temporary Cloth Inspector was appointed on Rs. 75 per month and he had to control the movement of cloth in the district or in the subdivisions to the tune of lakhs of rupees there could be no wonder if some of them did succumb to the circumstances. It was extremely difficult for the District Magistrate at the head to control the sudden huge increase of work and the incidence of a large number of purely temporary departments and temporary personnel. The emergency took away a number of senior officers in the Civil and Police Services to special departments. But it could be said with emphasis that the service personnel at the top as a class had rallied wonderfully and worked very hard to meet the exigency of the situation. It was also a remarkable achievement that the Services continued to give their very best under the new set-up of Government with the advent of the popular Ministry in 1946.

Many of the temporary departments that had been created because of circumstances brought in by the Second Great War closed down at the proper time. Some of them like Supply Department had to be continued in some shape or other and has received some fillips occasionally. New problems were created with partition of the country and the creation of Pakistan. A large number of Muslims from Bihar for various reasons migrated to Pakistan. Quite a number of Muslims from this district also went away. There was a panic among both the communities for some months following the communal outburst in 1946. This tension received its peak after

the partition which encouraged the Muslims to migrate. A very large number of Hindus from East Pakistan came over to India and had to fan themselves out in the different districts. This district also had received some displaced persons. The relief and rehabilitation of the displaced persons became a major problem for some time and has continued till now as an important problem. This district as has been mentioned elsewhere, having already reached the saturating point of her agricultural economy and because of a very high density of population could not possibly receive a very large number of displaced persons. Indirectly the problem had hit this district as well because thousands of displaced persons had to be settled elsewhere and their problems met. With the communications now any such major circumstance in any part of the State is bound to affect another part.

As has been mentioned before development work has been given a great emphasis in the present set-up of administration of the Welfare State. The rigours of casteism are sought to be removed both by statute and by propaganda. Laws have been made removing the disqualification of the Harijans from entering temples. Wide facilities have been given to the backward communities and scheduled castes for education. A large number of welfare schemes have been taken up for the backward communities and scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. National Extension Service Blocks and Community Development Projects have been started in all parts of the district. The idea is to carry out intensive co-ordinated rural development of each area with the active association and participation of the people. The administrative set-up has had to change very considerably because of the abolition of zamindary. There is no intermediary link now between the State and the cultivators. All these changes at the district level were to be controlled from the Collectorate and had taxed to the utmost the set-up of the Collectorate. the office of the District Officer with its own old pattern. It was felt that this pattern must go. For this reason the State Government deputed a senior officer, Mr. B. D. Pande, to study the problems of the reorganisation of districts and subdivisional offices.

Mr. B. D. Pande, I.C.S., took into account the existing circumstances which covered the separation of the judiciary and the executive, the development programmes and the consequent changes towards a welfare administration and the staff that had been recruited on *ad hoc* basis, the lack of method of working, supervision or inspection. It was felt that the Collectorate was not organised into properly defined unit with a proper structure which was essential for efficient office organisation. Ill-assorted arrangement at the top was bound to affect the ramifications and the actual working of the schemes.

The number of clerical staff had gone up more than four times as compared with the number of clerical staff in 1904. In some districts the number of ministerial staff had gone up to near about

600 persons. If to this were added the number of field staff that were working under the Collectorate, namely, *Karamcharis*, Village Level Workers, *Gram Sewaks*, Inspectorates, etc., it was found that the non-gazetted establishment under some of the Collectorates would amount to as large as 2,000. This huge array of assistants itself called for administrative and organisational problem of its own.

Most of the correspondence was carried out in the main office of the Collectorate known as the English Office which was itself a misnomer. The English Office formerly had two main divisions, judicial and revenue. While a number of revenue subjects were still dealt with in the English Office, there was a fairly big separate revenue establishment, consequent on the abolition of zamindary. Correspondence was also carried on in a large number of smaller offices. This led to duplication of files and papers, lack of supervision, etc. Accordingly the Collectorate was recommended to be divided into seven principal sections as follows :—

(1) Confidential—This was to be directly under the Collector.
(2) General Office—This was to replace the English Office.
(3) Revenue Office—This was to correspond to the present Revenue Office set-up on the abolition of zamindaries and include all allied subjects.
(4) Development Office.
(5) Establishment Office.
(6) Legal Section.
(7) Treasury and Accounts.

The proposed distribution of subjects was as below :—

Section I—Confidential.

Section II—General.—(1) Law and Order: (2) Agrarian Disputes, (3) Maintenance of Public Order Act; (4) Collective Fines; (5) Police and Homeguards; (6) Requisitioning and derequisitioning of property; (7) Allotment of houses; (8) Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board; (9) Elections; (10) Census; (11) Cinemas and Dramatic Performances; (12) Licenses (Arms, Explosives, etc.); (13) Press, including examination of newspaper cuttings; (14) Public Relations; (15) Relief and rehabilitation of displaced persons from Pakistan; (16) Evacuee Property Act; (17) Passports and Visas; (18) Domicile Certificate, (19) Political Sufferers; (20) Jails; (21) Supply and Price Control; (22) Anti-Corruption; (23) Assembly, Council and Parliament Questions; (24) Local Bodies, that is, Municipalities, District Boards, Notified Area Committees and other Union Committees; (25) Library; (26) Forms and Stationery; (27) Labour, including Minimum Wages Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, etc.

Section III—Revenue.—(1) Land Reforms; (2) Tenancy Act; (3) Rent and Cess; (4) Khas Mahal; (5) Rent Commutation; (6) Chaukidari; (7) Settlement; (8) Ballbandhi; (9) Malkhana; (10) Registration; (11) Chakrana; (12) Embankment; (13) Excise and Opium; (14) Kanungo Establishment; (15) Taxation Measures; (16) Record Room; (17 Copying Department; (18) Certificate; (19) Nazarat; (20) Circuit House. (21) Land Acquisition; (22) Ferries; (23) Mining; (24) Treasure Trove; (25) Stamps; (26) Crop and Weather Reports; (27) Flood and Scarcity.

Section IV—Development.—(1) Five-Year Plan and Co-ordination; (2) District Development Committee; (3) District Planning Committee; (4) District Education Committee; (5) Community Project and National Extension Service; (6) Local Development Works Programme; (7) Irrigation (Major, Medium and Minor); (8) Reclamation of Wasteland; (9) Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes; (10) Gram Panchayats; (11) Vested Zamindary Improvement Works; (12) Welfare activities of other departments including Grow More Food; (13) Statistics; (14) Forests; (15) Loans; including Agriculturists' Loans, Land Improvement Loans, Loans under the State Aid to Industries Act, etc.; (16) National Savings Scheme; (17) Works Staff in the Districts.

Section V—Establishment.—(1) Personal cases—maintenance of service books, character rolls, leave accounts, etc., of personnel employed under the Collector; (2) Appointments, postings and transfers; (3) Leave; (4) Departmental Proceedings; (5) Provident Fund Gratuity; (6) Pensions; (7) Security; (8) Bill and Budget Works of the Collectorate.

Section VI—Legal Section.—(1) Revenue and Judicial Munshikhana; (2) Civil Suits; (3) Pauper Suits; (4) Criminal Motions; (5) Inspection of Trial Registers; (6) Appeals; (7) Correspondence with the Legal Remembrancer; (8) High Court; (9) Release of Prisoners; (10) Pleaders, Mukhtars and Revenue Agents; (11) Probate; (12) Wakf Estates—Religious Endowments; (13) Payment of Pleaders' bills; (14) Judicial Accounts; (15) Criminal Fines; (16) Law Agents and Law Clerks; (17) Other Criminal, Civil or Revenue Appeals or Motions and matters connected therewith; (18) Court Malkhana.

Section VII—Treasury and Accounts.—(1) Treasury and Accounts; (2) Sale of Stamps.

Mr. Pande made a detailed recommendation for the offices indicating the scales of pay under the different heads. He had further recommended for the removal of the artificial distinction between Class A and Class B Districts. At the time of the Slacke Committee's Report a distinction was made between the districts mainly on the basis of the number of assistants employed under a Collectorate. Where the number of clerks was below 100 the district was placed in a lower category in respect of the pay of the supervisory staff. The number of clerks in every district was well above 100 when Mr. Pande made his enquiry and he felt that the ministerial officers employed in the different districts should have equal opportunity of promotion to a higher post. Therefore he recommended that the distinction between the different districts in matter of salaries to be drawn by persons doing the same kind of jobs should be abolished.

There was a certain amount of inviduous distinction between a Sadar Subdivision and a Mofussil Subdivision. The recommendation was that the Sadar Subdivisional Office should be organised more or less on the lines of Mofussil Subdivisions. The Sadar Subdivisional Officer was to have the following departments :—

> General Office; Elections; Development; Confidential; Loans and Relief; National Extension Service and *Gram Panchayats*; Supply and Price Control; Minor Irrigation; Public Relations; Welfare; Chaukidari; Nazarat; Certificate; B. T. Act cases; Library; Land Reforms—L. L. Fee; Revenue Munshikhana; Arms; and Cinemas and other licenses.

According to Mr. Pande the Collectorate should also retain Probate, Civil Suits, Malikhana, Mines, Revenue Appeals, Settlement, Embankment, Ballbandi, and Land Acquisition Sections. Another important change that had to be taken cognisance of was that with the abolition of zamindary and the vesting of the zamindary into the State, the Khasmahal Department of a district had lost its separate entity. The Khasmahal was, therefore, to be completely merged with the Land Reforms Department. The Landlord Fee Department of the Collectorate had to be abolished as with the abolition of the zamindary, no money-orders had to be sent or acknowledged. It was recommended that arrangements should be made with the District Registration Office or the Sub-Registrar to deposit the Landlord Fee direct into the treasury, and send notices to the Circle Officers or the *Anchal Adhikaris* concerned.

Mr. Pande went into some detail as to the necessary augmentation of certain departments like Nazarat, Certificate. Record Room, etc. He considered that since the *Anchal Adhikari* was also the Block Development Officer, the certificate powers should not be vested in him and the procedure of getting certificates executed through the Subdivisional Officer should continue. It may be noted here

that the work in connection with certificates has been transferred to the *Anchal* Officers in the other *raiyatwari* States of Bombay, Madras, Uttar Pradesh, etc.

Mr. Pande had also given elaborate suggestions for the working of the Development Office, Welfare Department, *Gram Panchayats,* Loans Department, Establishment Office, Legal Office, Inspections, etc. He had recommended that questionnaires to assist in the inspection as in the case of some of the older manuals should be prescribed for the new branches also like those of development, revenue, etc. They will be of valuable guidance to junior officers.

He also felt that there should be adequate delegations of powers to officers at all levels, namely, *Anchal Adhikaris,* Subdivisional Officers, Collectors, etc. He had also indicated the necessity of a regular training of the newly-recruited assistants and that the training should be closely integrated with practical training in the office itself.

The Chief Secretary in his no. OM|R-302|56—10443, dated the 20th December 1957, had approved of the suggestions and informed the District Officers by name that the arrangements should be made forthwith to introduce the Reorganisation Scheme in the districts and subdivisions from the 2nd January 1958. He reiterated that the Collectorate should be divided into seven principal sections as recommended by Mr. B. D. Pande. He further expected that the Sadar Subdivisional Officers should function separately from the Collectorate like Mofussil Subdivisional Officers with the departments as recommended by Mr. Pande and the Collectorate should, however, retain the nine subjects mentioned before as per Mr. Pande's recommendations. There was a further reiteration of Mr. Pande's scheme in the letter of Mr. M. S. Rao, I.C.S., Chief Secretary, no. R2-302|56-CSR.—365, dated the 9th July 1958. In this letter the existing distinction between A and B Class Districts in respect of pay scale for various categories of the posts was abolished. Orders were passed for the merging of the Khasmahal Office in the General Land Reforms Office, the abolition of L. L. Fee Department and other recommendations regarding Nazarat, Certificate, Establishment, Legal Section, etc.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

With the separation of the executive from the judiciary in 1951 the criminal administration came under the direct control of the Hon'ble High Court of Patna. The District and Sessions Judge looks after the administration of justice in the district. As there was a shortage of Munsifs, some Magistrates were vested with judiciary powers. The Munsif-Magistrates and Judicial Magistrates were placed under the direct control of the Sessions Judge of Saran.

In 1958 there were three courts of stipendiary Judicial Magistrates and two courts of Honorary Judicial Magistrates at Sadar,

three courts of Munsif-Magistrates at Siwan and one court of Munsif-Magistrate and stipendiary Judicial Magistrate at Gopalganj. The district judgeship as mentioned before is headed by the District and Sessions Judge and in the sessions cases he is assisted by two Additional Sessions Judges, two Additional District Judges who act as Additional Sessions Judges and the two Subordinate Judges in charge of permanent courts act as Assistant Sessions Judges. The details of criminal administration have been covered in the Chapter on Law and Order and Justice.

In Civil administration the District Judge is assisted by two Additional District Judges, two permanent Subordinate Judges and five Additional Subordinate Judges. There are four Munsifs at Sadar, two permanent and two additional Munsifs at Siwan and one permanent and one additional Munsifs at Gopalganj. The details of the Civil administration have been given in a separate chapter.

There were 393 *Gram Panchayat* courts in Saran in 1958 which have been established under the Bihar Gram Panchayat Raj Act, 1947. Besides there were three *Panchayat* courts which were established under the Village Administration Act. Details of the working of the *Gram Panchayats* have been given separately in the Chapter on Local Self-Government.

POLICE.

The district police administration is under the Superintendent of Police who is under the administrative control of the District Magistrate. The Superintendent of Police is responsible for maintaining law and order. His headquarters are at Chapra. He is under the administrative control of the Deputy Inspector-General of Police of the Northern Range, whose headquarters are at Muzaffarpur.

For police purpose, the district is divided into five police circles which fall in the three subdivisions. There are altogether 30 police-stations and 16 police outposts in the district.

The police organisation of the district in 1958 consisted of one Superintendent of Police, four Deputy Superintendents of Police, one Sergeant-Major, three Sergeants, six Inspectors, 64 Sub-Inspectors, 64 Assistant Sub Inspectors, 41 Havildars and 996 Constables. Timely additions or depletions to this staff were made to suit administrative exigencies.

The rural police force consists of 247 Dafadars and 2,620 Chaukidars. Each village has one or two Chaukidars who look after the police work in the rural areas. The Chaukidars are commissioned to give round duty in their beats during the night and to apprehend criminals, if any. For details in police organisation please see the Chapter on Law and Order and Justice.

EXCISE.

The excise administration of the district is controlled by the District Magistrate who is assisted by a Superintendent of Excise with

headquarters at Chapra. The Superintendent of Excise is also under the administrative control of the Deputy Commissioner, Excise, North Bihar Range, with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur and the Commissioner of Excise, Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna. The Excise Commissioner is the administrative head of the department. For the purpose of administration the district is divided into 20 circles each under the charge of an Excise Sub-Inspector. In each of the subdivision there is an Inspector of Excise who exercises control over the Circle Sub-Inspectors. Besides, there are three Excise Inspectors who control the distilleries of Marhowrah, Mirganj and Pachrukhi.

The revenue from *tari* was previously derived from license fee for shops settled on auction only. In 1932 the tree-tax system was introduced in the district. In 1938 prohibition was imposed on the sale of country liquor, *tari, ganja* and *bhang*. This prohibition was first of it kind in the province of Bihar but the experiment of prohibition could not be successful. The Government lifted prohibition on country spirit and *tari* from 1943 and on *ganja* and *bhang* from 1945. Tree-tax system came into operation again from 1945. In order to eliminate speculation the Government had introduced sliding scale system in respect of country spirit, *ganja, bhang* and opium from 1951.

The statistics of revenue derived from different heads are as follows :—

	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Country spirit ..	10,23,042	9,67,816	10,23,004	11,83,526	11,85,583
Ganja ..	63,061	61,304	99,128	95,708	1,04,339
Bhang ..	3,192	2,809	2,547	1,967	2,130
Opium ..	6,394	7,816	2,971	11,899	13,325
Tari ..	11,97,540	12,72,217	12,23,971	12,26,365	11,41,211
Foreign liquor ..	12,784	20,166	12,890	17,741	16,104
Denatured spirit	3,649	9,043	12,847	12,747	11,866
Miscellaneous ..	23,950	17,524	15,781	8,700	22,917
Total ..	23,33,612	23,58,695	23,93,139	25,58,653	24,97,475

Country spirit.

At first, the country spirit shops used to be settled on out-still system. This was changed in 1913-14 to distillery system. Under this system, liquor warehouses were established at all subdivisional headquarters to store, blend, reduce and issue liquor to the shops in their jurisdiction. In 1950-51, the system of settling country spirit shops to auction was changed to sliding scale system to eliminate speculation. The revenue figures mentioned above will show that

there had been gradual upward tendency except in 1953-54. This rise is due to the gradual increase in the duty and the license fee.

Ganja.

The revenue from *ganja* is derived from duty and license fees. The sliding scale system was introduced in 1950-51. The duty on *ganja* has steadily been raised to minimise its consumption without revenue being affected. The revenue derived from *ganja* has shown marked increase from Rs. 63,061 in 1952-53 to Rs. 1,04,339 in 1956-57.

Bhang.

Bhang grows widely in the rural areas of the district. Duty and license fees have been raised from time to time to restrict its consumption without affecting the revenue. The consumption of *bhang* from the license shops is nominal.

Opium.

The retail price of opium has been consistently increased to bring down consumption as far as possible. In 1951-52, a system of permit was introduced to further cut down its consumption and to prevent fresh addicts. The State Government have imposed a ban on the consumption of opium from the lst April, 1959. Sale of opium would henceforth be controlled by medical certificates.

Tari.

The revenue derived from *tari* was previously derived from license fees for shops settled on auction only. As stated before in 1932 the tree-tax system was introduced in the district and in 1951 sliding system was introduced to eliminate speculation. As is evident from the statistics the revenue derived from *tari* is considerable. It is the poor man's beverage. Palm trees in Saran are found in abundance. Unfermented *tari* has medicinal value.

Foreign Liquor.

The consumption of foreign liquor is confined only in the urban areas. The high price of the imported liquor has confined its consumption to the richer class only. The revenue derived from imported liquor is greater than the *bhang* and opium. The revenue derived from it had shown a remarkable increase from Rs. 12,754 in 1952-53 to Rs. 20,166 in 1953-54 but in 1954-55 it had again fallen to Rs. 12,890. In 1955-56 the revenue derived from it was Rs. 17,741 as against Rs. 16,104 in 1956-57. The price of foreign liquor, the import of which is restricted, has gone up very considerably and that explains the lesser consumption.

Commercial Spirit.

The revenue mainly comes from license fees of denatured spirit including medical wines. From the statistics it is evident that revenue derived from it had shown a marked increase.

CENTRAL EXCISE.

The Central Excise Department which is a Central Government Department is headed by the Superintendent of Central Excise with his headquarters at Chapra. He is under the Collector of Central Excise with his headquarters in Patna. In his work he is assisted by a Deputy Superintendent, twenty Inspectors and two Supervisors. There are also sepoys to assist the superior staff in checking smuggling. The duties on sugar, cloth, tobacco, power alcohol and steel are Central revenue and are collected by the employees of Central Government.

The Central Excise revenue in the district from 1952-53 to 1956-57 is as follows :—

	1952-53.	1953-54.	1954-55.	1955-56.	1956-57.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Tobacco ..	4,03,863	3,03,386	3,97,089	5,58,514	5,46,859
Sugar ..	33,47,360	70,39,278	79,41,120	73,31,355	84,17,170
Power alcohol ..	8,09,443	11,60,801	8,33,998	9,49,571	9,31,992

The revenue derived from sugarcane has shown practically very little increase in course of five years. The area under tobacco is not considerable. The sugar is the principal item of revenue to Central Excise. Saran is one of the chief sugarcane producing areas in the State and is only second to Champaran district. There are seven sugar industries in the district. The sugar manufactured at Marhowrah has gained reputation in Bihar. From the statistics it is apparent that revenue derived from sugar has increased remarkably. Sugar is despatched from the sugar factories according to the quota released by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture of the Government of India. The other main item of the Central Excise is the power alcohol. The revenue derived from it has not shown much fluctuation.

REGISTRATION.

At the district headquarters, the District Sub-Registrar deals with the document presented, while the District Magistrate who is *ex-officio* District Registrar exercises a general supervision over the work of the Sub-Registrars There are twelve registration offices in the district. They are located at Chapra, Marhowrah, Ekma, Sonepur, Siwan, Darauli, Basantpur, Gopalganj, Mirganj, Maharajganj, Masrakh and Barharia. The average number of documents registered annually during the five years 1924—1928 was 63,820 and the number of documents registered in 1928 was 68,954 as against 96,999 in 1957. The average number of documents registered during the six years 1952—1957 was 97,336 or in the course of three decades

the registration has increased by 60 per cent. The statistics of registered documents from 1946 to 1957 are given below :—

Year.		Documents. registered.	Receipts.	Expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1946	..	99,833	4,31,247	1,34,240
1947	..	1,09,220	5,14,004	1,36,302
1948	..	94,353	5.01,526	1,36,923
1949	..	1,01,152	6,89.409	1,69,389
1950	..	1,10,558	7,45,140	1,79,389
1951	..	1,09,281	7,80,366	1,98,741
1952	..	1,00,994	6,73,155	1,96,132
1953	..	1,01,955	6,88,521	1,97,031
1954	..	1,00,873	6,73,054	1,86,309
1955	..	87,269	6,00,115	1,80,119
1956	..	93,931	6,11,101	1,75,122
1957	..	1,00,094	6,75,143	1,88,525

STAMPS.

The revenue from the sale of stamps is an important source of income to State Government and ranks in importance only next to excise. The rising figures of stamps also go to prove that litigation has increased tremendously. In 1906-07 the sale of stamps amounted to Rs. 3,85,473 as against Rs. 7,68,673 in 1928-29. There had been a tremendous increase in revenue derived from stamps as will be evident from the statistics given below :—

The revenue from sale of stamps in 1952-53 was Rs. 19,86,914; in 1953-54 Rs. 19,78,779; in 1954-55 Rs 18,66,463; in 1955-56 Rs. 19,85,035 and in 1956-57 Rs. 19,81,384 Thus it will be seen that in course of three decades the revenue derived from stamps has increased by about 175 per cent.

COMMERCIAL TAXES DEPARTMENT.

The Saran Circle of the Commercial Taxes Department was created in 1944 and the area of the Circle coincides with the area of the revenue district of Saran. There is a Commissioner of Commercial Taxes with his headquarters at Patna. The Superintendent of Commercial Taxes is the administrative head of the Circle. In 1952 a Sub-Circle was created at Siwan with the area comprising the subdivisions of Siwan and Gopalganj and is administered by an Assistant Superintendent of Commercial Taxes. Besides, there are two Inspectors in the district.

This department is concerned with the assessment and realisation of the following taxes :—

(*i*) Agricultural Income-Tax; (*ii*) Sale Tax; (*iii*) Entertainment Tax; (*iv*) Electricity Duty; (*v*) Tax on Sale of Motor Spirit; and (*vi*) Transport Tax.

Agricultural Income-Tax.—The Agricultural Income-tax was levied in 1938 under the Bihar Agricultural Income-Tax Act of 1938, but its administration was first taken over by the Commercial Taxes Department in 1944-45 and in Saran in 1944-45, it yielded a total income of Rs. 1,68,330. The collection from the tax reached its peak in 1950-51 when it rose to Rs. 2,80,820 which was mainly due to enhancement in the rate of the tax. In 1954-55 it recorded a big fall to Rs. 20,228 only. The reason for it was mainly due to the taking over of the big zamindaries by the State Government and the bad economic condition of the agriculturists in general. Secondly many of the zamindars of the district filed petition to Government that the unpaid dues of the Agricultural Income-Tax may be realised from the *ad interim* compensation money to be payable to them by the Government. It had, however, shown an upward tendency later.

Sales Tax.—It was introduced in the State from 1944-45. In 1946-47 the collection from this tax amounted to Rs. 3,90,829 and since then it recorded upward trend and in 1950-51 and 1951-52 the collection rose to Rs. 22,91,067 and Rs. 22,90,752, respectively. But after that it had shown downward trend and the collection in 1954-55 stood at Rs. 17,27,088. The reason for it was mainly owing to the exemption of tax on goods despatched outside the State since the 26th January 1950, depression in trade and the deregistration of a large number of dealers consequent upon the raising of the registrable limit from over 10,000 to over 15,000 from 1954.

Entertainment Tax.—The administration of this tax was taken over by the Commercial Taxes Department in 1948-49 during which the total collection was Rs. 64,584. After that it had a steep rise and in 1951-52 the total collection made was Rs. 94,100. But in 1954-55 the collection came down to Rs. 79,079. But this fall is mainly due to arrear in collection.

Electricity Duty.—The electricity duty was first levied in the district in 1948-49 and the total receipt was Rs. 3,039. In 1954-55 the collection rose to Rs. 45,581. This increase was due to the extension of electrification.

Motor Spirit (Sales) Tax.—Before 1949 this tax was realised by the Excise Department. In 1949-50 the total receipt from this tax amounted to Rs. 21.223. Since then there had been constant rise in collection which rose to Rs. 87,862 in 1954-55. This was partly due to rise in duty and the gradual improvement in the condition of the roads of the district.

Passengers and Goods Transport Tax.—It was levied for the first time in 1950 and during the year the total yield from the tax was Rs. 1,145. It has shown upward tendency since then and in 1954-55 the total receipt rose from this tax to Rs. 23,634. It was mainly due to the tremendous increase in the number of vehicles and the gradual improvements and modernisation in the condition of the roads.

The statistics of Commercial Taxes under receipts and expenditure are given below :—

Receipts.

Year.	Agri. Tax.	Sales Tax.	Entertainment Tax.	Elec. Duty.	Motor Spirit.	Transport Tax.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1950-51	2,80,820	22,91,067	82,304	26,770	24,688	1,145
1951-52	2,46,524	22,90,752	94,100	20,040	31,107	1,420
1952-53	83,773	16,10,040	84,696	23,843	35,298	6,073
1953-54	82,334	18,22,637	55,731	41,641	67,487	9,056
1954-55	20,228	17,27,088	79,079	45,581	87,862	23,634
1955-56	89,162	17,36,523	99,129	53,932	98,015	26,125
1956-57	2,41,315	17,99,377	1,23,717	63,493	1,38,393	30,859

Expenditure.

Year.	Pay of officers.	Cost of establishments.	Travelling allowance.	Cost of living allowance.	Contingencies.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1951-52 ..	7,917	19,343	5,000	10,020	3,191
1952-53 ..	8,920	19,656	8,115	11,087	4,500
1953-54 ..	9,078	21,621	6,452	12,122	4,380
1954-55 ..	10,928	24,576	8,842	13,887	6,276
1955-56 ..	11,462	28,095	15,449	7,600	7,880
1956-57 ..	8,043	20,082	10,831	3,882	5,142

The Commercial Taxes Department is one of the most important revenue-yielding departments of the State Government. So far as the income of the Government is concerned it has replaced the Income-Tax which is now the Central subject.

INCOME-TAX.

Income-tax is now a Central subject. Before the passing of the Indian Income-Tax Act, 1922, it was administered by the Provincial Government. The Central Government has appointed an Income-Tax

Officer in each district for assessment and collection of the income-tax. The headquarters of the Income-Tax Officer of the Saran Circle is at Chapra. The work of assessment and collection is governed by the provisions of the Indian Income-Tax Act, 1922, while the rate of tax is laid down by the Finance Act of each year. In the month of April every year a notice is published in all the important journals of the State inviting persons having income over the taxable minimum by the Finance Act of the year to submit returns showing their total income of the previous year within five days of the publication of the notice. Notices are also issued individually to persons likely to have taxable income to file their returns of income. On the basis of these returns and after giving opportunity to the assessees to prove the income shown by them, assessments are calculated and completed by the Income-Tax Officer and the Tax-Collector. With the introduction of the taxes under the Estate Duty, Wealth-Tax Act, Expenditure-Tax Act and the Gift-Tax Act the field of the Income-Tax administration has much widened.

The statistics of assessees, net demand and collection of the Saran Circle of the last three years are as follows :—

Year.	No. of assessees.	Net demand.	Net collection.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1955-56	1,427	5,24,386	4,43,361
1956-57	1,398	8,52,365	7,20,499
1957-58	959	6,59,000	5,81,911

The big fall in the number of assessees in 1957-58 is due to the inclusion of the Hajipur subdivision which formerly formed part of the Saran Circle into the Muzaffarpur Circle.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT.

The Public Relations Department works under the District Magistrate. A special mention has to be made because of the increasing importance of this section. It was established in Chapra in 1956 under the Second Five-Year Plan. The department is headed by a District Public Relations Officer who is under the immediate control of the District Magistrate. The District Relations Officer is assisted by an Assistant Public Relations Officer. These officers are expected to make extensive tours in the district in order to make the people aware of the development work and their co-operation and assistance which requires for the execution of the development programme. The Department has a mobile van fitted with cinema projection equipments, which is taken round the villages for documentary shows. The documentaries are educative and entertaining and concern with agriculture, health, sanitation and industries.

An Information Centre is attached to the Department where publications of various types are available. There is a scheme to supply radio sets on subsidy basis to the villages having a population of one thousand and above. Two hundred and twenty-two radio sets have been distributed in such villages up to August, 1958. With the various development projects this section has to play a very prominent role in explaining to the public, particularly in the rural areas the aims of the Government and the duties and responsibilities of the public.

DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICE.

The District Magistrate is the District Election Officer in the district and for the day-to-day work he is assisted by a Deputy Collector. The Subdivisional Officers are in direct charge of the election in their respective subdivisions and work under the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate is himself the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer. The printing and arrangement of electoral rolls are done in the District Election Office.

The preparation of electoral rolls on the basis of adult franchise is a tremendous task as the electoral rolls based on adult franchise have to be revised in every five years before the general election. There were twenty-five constituencies for Legislative Assembly and four for the Members of Parliament in 1952 (General Election) as against twenty-three and four, respectively, in 1957. There were twenty-eight Members (M.L.A.) from the district in the Legislative Assembly of Bihar in 1952 as against twenty-six in 1957. There had been no fluctuation in number of the Members of the Parliament in the Second General Election.

CHAPTER X.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

HISTORY OF LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

There are particularly no materials available in Saran to trace out definitely the history of land revenue administration in the pre-Muhammedan period. It may, however, generally be stated that the Mauryas, the Guptas and the Kankubjas followed a comprehensive and uniform land revenue administration based on the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya. The king's share or *bhaga* of reaped crops was the most important source of State revenue, and *Shadbhagin,* "a sharer of the sixth part", a standing epithet of the king. The *bhaga* was measured out either by the village authorities or by the royal officials at the barn-doors or by survey of the crops. Among the most important officials was the *Gram-bhojaka* or the village headman.* Later *Gopa* stood for *Gram-bhojaka.* Throughout the Hindu period subject to slight modifications the system of land revenue administration followed the same pattern.

The early Muslim rulers were conquerors first and administrators next. They did not bring any striking change in the land revenue administration. The system of land revenue underwent a change during the reign of Allauddin Khilji, Ghiyas-uddin Tughlaq, Muhammad Bin Tughlaq and Sikandar Lodi. So far as Saran is concerned we have no definite information. The first two Mughals had no time to bring about any change. It was Akbar who made an attempt to follow a vigorous land revenue policy and as such an effort will be made here to describe the history of the land revenue administration in Saran since Akbar's great settlement at the close of the sixteenth century.

It is proposed to adhere to the division of this period into six parts in the *Final Report of Survey and Settlement Report* (1903), viz. :—

(*i*) The Muhammadan period (1582—1765).

(*ii*) The early British period closing with the decennial settlement of 1790.

(*iii*) The Permanent Settlement of 1793 and its effects.

(*iv*) The resumption proceedings in the first half of the nineteenth century.

(*v*) The Revenue Survey of 1844.

(*vi*) The modern period leading up to the cadastral survey of 1893—1901.

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* *An Advanced History of India* by R. C. Mazumdar, H. C. Raychaudhury and K. K. Dutta, page 74.

It is not necessary for our limited purposes to examine the available sources for land revenue history for Saran district. Kerr's *Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations* (1893—1901), published in 1903, has been followed by O'Malley and Middleton in their Saran Gazetteers, published in 1908 and 1930, respectively. We will refer to this Settlement Report extensively for the history which was not done by O'Malley or Middleton.

The Muhammadan Period (1582—1765).

The present district of Saran generally corresponds to the area of *Sarkar* Saran, which was one of the six *Sarkars* forming the *Subah* of Bihar in the reign of Akbar. The *Sarkar,* however, included one small *pargana* which now forms part of the district of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. The first assessment of this area, of which any authentic record exists is that made by Todar Mall in 1582 A. D. An account of this settlement is given in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Apparently before Akbar's reform though theoretically as stated before the cultivator had to pay one-sixth of the gross produce to the State, no rules existed as to the manner in which the amount payable was to be ascertained, and in addition to the land revenue numerous other demands were exacted by the way of poll-tax, profession taxes, fees to local officials, and various kinds of *abwabs* or illegal taxations. It is stated that even *corvee* was in practice. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the collection of revenue was burdensome to the tax-payer and unprofitable to the State, the person who mainly benefited being the tax collector. Akbar based his system mainly on the land revenue. He abolished most of the miscellaneous taxes and *abwabs* and while he raised the demand of the State to one-third of the gross produce of the soil (except in certain special cases) he took steps to ensure that the amount payable was ascertained after full and careful enquiry. But in raising the land revenue of the State it cannot be said that he made any striking departure from his predecessors. While no important changes in revenue administration are recorded to have been effected by Iltutmish and only some attempt was made by Balban to make it orderly, Alauddin's revenue policy was comprehensive, affecting all types of land tenures, and Muhammad Bin Tughluq's vigorous but ill-advised revenue policy also deeply influenced the condition of the State. The rate of assessment also varied, being excessively high since the time of Alauddin, who charged 50 per cent on the gross produce of the land. In spite of his general leniency, Ghiyas-uddin Tughluq does not seem to have reduced the scale as fixed by Alauddin, and in time of Muhammad Bin Tughluq it was certainly not lower, if not higher, than this.

Todar Mull's move was a land-mark. The main features of Todar Mall's assessment were as follows :—

(1) A measurement of all arable and productive land with a standard *bigha*.

(2) An estimate of the gross outturn per *bigha*, based on an elaborate classification of soils according to their productiveness and natural advantages.

(3) The commutation of the Government share of the gross produce to money rates based on the average prices for a period of 19 years

The result of this assessment in Saran was that the arable and productive area was found to cover 2,29,052 *bighas* or, at the accepted standard of conversion about 2,65,600 acres, or 415 square miles. It is noticeable that at this time less than one-fifth of the district had been brought under cultivation, and the revenue assessed by Todar Mall was 1,61,72,004 *dams*, or 4,04,300 rupees at the rate of Rs. 1-8-0 per productive acre.

Curiously enough, this rate of Rs. 1-8-0 seems to have been fairly general throughout Bihar, including the forest-covered backward district of Champaran. This will show that Todar Mall was a very clever administrator and knew that a very minute and detailed land revenue policy differing from district to district may be unsuccessful in the hands of incompetent and careless subordinates.

The actual work of measurement was done by *amins* who were paid at a fixed rate at one *dam* for each *bigha*, and as the standard of outturn was 200 *bighas* a day in the hot weather and 250 *bighas* in the cold, an *amin* should have had no difficulty in earning the very handsome remuneration of Rs. 5 a day. The actual estimate and appraisement of the produce seems to have been done by the village *patwaris*. The supervising staff consisted of a *kanungo* in each *pargana* and an *amalguzar* or collector of revenue at the head of each *Sarkar* or district. This was undoubtedly based on the fiscal division of the great Sur ruler, Sher Shah with slight modification. Both *kanungo* and *amalguzar* were strictly enjoined to carry out the duties of appraisement personally in all cases of disputes and not to leave them to the *patwaris* and village headmen, but the areas entrusted to them were so large as to render this almost a counsel of perfection. Judged from a modern standpoint the supervising staff was in fact lamentably weak, and there can be little doubt that many of the excellent rules in the *Ain-i-Akbari* were honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Nevertheless, Todar Mall's assessment must have been an enormous improvement over the state of affairs that preceded it, and it achieved the highest measure of success so far as its immediate object was concerned. It decreased the total nominal public demand but increased the actual revenue by diminishing the illicit gains of intermediaries between the State and the people. It may be added that the assessment was at first revised every year, but this was found too burdensome a task and was abandoned in favour of decennial settlement based on the average price of the preceding ten years.

The assessment of 1685.—The next fresh general revenue assessment was made in 1685 in the reign of Aurangzeb No details are available as to the method adopted, but there does not appear to have been a new measurement. The result, however, was that the revenue expressed in *dams* was more than doubled, as it was raised from 1,61,72,004 *dams* to 3,71,62,144. Part of this increase was, however, due to the depreciation in the value of the *dam*. According to Mr. Grant as mentioned in the Settlement Report 46½ *dams* were equivalent to a rupee in Aurangzeb's time as against 40 in Akbar's reign. The rise in the revenue was Rs. 4,04,300 to Rs. 8,01,461. But the rise did not actually mean much of increasing pressure to the existing *raiyats*. A large part of this increase was doubtless due to extension of cultivation, but in the absence of all area statistics it is impossible to say the extent of the expansion. The comparative peace must have encouraged expansion of cultivation. A considerable area was appropriated to form *jagirs* or revenue free grants for the purpose of remunerating the civil and military officers of the empire over whom the central authorities had but little control.

Ali Vardi Khan's assessment of 1750.—The assessment made in 1685 remained unaltered until 1750, when the great Subahdar of Bihar, Ali Vardi Khan made a fresh settlement. Like its predecessor it was not based on any measurement, and its main object seems to have been to incorporate with the land revenue demand, a number of *abwabs* which though nominally abolished by Akbar, had never actually disappeared. Its result so far as Saran was concerned was to raise the revenue from 3,71,62,144 *dams* to 4,87,77,289 *dams*, or allowing for a further depreciation in the value of the *dam* from Rs. 8,01,401 to Rs. 9,29,856. But this total included a considerable sum which was paid to the revenue collecting officials by way of *jagirs*, etc., and never reached the Government.

Revision in 1765.—A further readjustment was undertaken in 1765. The total assessment made by Ali Vardi Khan was left unaltered, but the net demand payable to Government was separated from that appropriated for the purposes of *jagirs* and religious and charitable endowments. The result for the six *Sarkars* forming the province of Bihar is shown in the annexed statement.—

Sarkar.	Area in square miles.	Total assessment.	Net assessment payable to Government.	Rate of total assessment per acre.
		Rs.	Rs.	As. p.
Tirhut ..	5,033	8,20,042	2,45,312	4 1
Hajipur ..	2,782	8,28,100	5,42,240	7 5
Champaran ..	2,546	4,00,217	3,21,000	3 10
Shahabad ..	1,869	8,26,845	6,09,268	11 1
Bihar ..	6,680	38,48,800	22,14,812	14 4
Saran ..	2,560	9,29,856	8,80,233	9 1

The total assessment of course shows the burden on the soil, the balance between it and the net assessment being appropriated by *jagirdars* on account of collection charges. The low net assessment realised by Government in Tirhut was due to the extraordinary large number of *jagirs* which the civil and military officers of the empire had managed to create in that district. It is remarkable that South Bihar was more highly assessed than North Bihar and the only explanation seems to be that as the former area was the more accessible and its land revenue administration was better supervised. But in North Bihar, Saran shows a much higher rate of assessment than any other district.

The early British Administration.

With the grant of *diwani* of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in August, 1765 to the East India Company, the collection of revenue at first was entrusted to the native agency, for the Council considered it doubtful whether the European servants generally possessed sufficient knowledge of the civil institutions and the interior state of the country to qualify them for the trust. But after four years of this system it was found necessary to appoint European supervisors to control the native subordinates in the collection of the revenue and the administration of civil justice, and in 1770 a revenue council was formed for Bihar with its headquarters at Patna for the purpose of supervising the supervisors. The latter were instructed to make enquiries and report on every detail concerning the interior economy and the mode of levying the land revenue.

It was soon found that the supervisors left much to be desired, and that the system of leaving the tax collectors uncontrolled had led to very gross abuses. The assessment was nominally based on that of 1765, and though the financial gain to the State coffers in Saran was excellent, over 80 per cent of the demand being realised, it was reported that the *Nazims* or native collectors "exacted what they could from the zamindars and the great farmers of the revenue, whom they left at liberty to plunder all below, reserving to themselves the prerogative of plundering them in turn when they were supposed to have enriched themselves with the spoils of the country". Accordingly, in 1772 the office of the *Naib Diwan* or head native revenue collector was abolished, and the Company's officers themselves took over the collection of the revenue, the supervisors being called collectors for the first time and placed under the control of a Board of Revenue in Calcutta. But the new departure was not a distinguished success. It was decided to settle the revenue by farming out the rent collections of five years to the highest bidder, but the farmers failed to carry out their obligations, and great loss resulted to the Company. Accordingly, in 1774, the European agency was again abolished and the revenue collection entrusted to *amils* working under a Provincial Council at Patna. But the Company had by this time realised that it was necessary to obtain a fuller

knowledge of the state of the country before a satisfactory assessment and a satisfactory method of collecting it could be revised and accordingly *amins* were deputed into every village and instructed to make the minutest enquiries as to " whatever might enable them to procure the most exact information of the real produce or value of the lands ".

Annual settlements were made by the Provincial Council* in the years 1777, 1778, 1789 and 1790 on the reports of the enquiries made under these somewhat vague instructions, and the collections continued to be made by native agency, but the only result was a gradual and steady diminution in the Company's revenue, and in 1781 the system was again altered, the Provincial Council being abolished. Districts were placed in charge of Collectors, who were subordinates to the Presidents of the abolished Councils and the latter were in turn subordinates to the control of the Committee of Revenue in Calcutta. Thus an arrangement much akin to the present system of administration was introduced.

The first authentic record of the revenue demand under British rule is found in the register of Nawab Hoshiyar Jang, Subhadar of Bihar, from which it appears that in 1773 the district of Saran, then known as *Sarkar* Saran, comprised 1,640 estates, 15 *parganas* and 4,650 villages, of which 297 villages were revenue-free, the revenue demand for the remainder Rs. 9,36,201 being only a slight increase over the last Moghul assessment of 1765. There are no papers from which the fluctuations in the annual demand up to the decennial settlement can be traced, but the collections are given in the following statement compiled from the *sesala* registers, which were based on the Kanungo's returns :--

Fasli	A. D.	Rs.	a.	p.
1168	1761	6,94,507	14	3
1169	1762	6,83,610	14	3
1170	1763	7,74,705	8	0
1171	1764	10,20,670	4	6
1172	1765	8.97,171	15	0
1173	1766	9,82,589	13	6
1174	1767	10,15,013	2	0
1175	1768	7,99.724	15	9
1176	1769	8,34,513	3	6
1177	1770	7,56,208	6	0
1178	1771	7,79,059	6	3
1179	1772	7.71,833	5	9
1180	1773	9,23,519	2	6
1181	1774	7,34,427	7	6
1182	1775	6,91,420	12	6
1183	1776	9,33,564	2	0
1184	1777	9,32,564	3	3

* See "Sarkar Saran" published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Revenue, Bihar

Fasli	A. D.			Rs.	a.	p.
1185	1778	..	..	8,69,834	7	3
1186	1779	..	..	5,37,754	14	0
1187	1780	..	..	4,43,798	11	9
1188	1781	..	..	6,77,197	7	3
1189	1782	..	..	5,98,327	15	9
1190	1783	..	..	5,32,044	15	0
1191	1784	..	..	5,01,086	10	6
1192	1785	..	..	4,34,069	15	0
1193	1786	..	..	1,46,852	9	9
1194	1787	..	..	5,77,496	3	3
1195	1788	..	..	4,17,560	4	0
1196	1789	..	..	5,98,226	3	6
1197	1790	..	..	9,71,145	15	10

The variations are sufficiently accounted for by the defective and constantly changing system of administration. But in addition. the district suffered severely from natural calamities. The great famine of 1770 in which one-third of the population is said to have perished was followed by serious floods and by another scarcity in 1783. Writing at the end of 1787 Mr. Montgomerie, the Collector, remarked: "Though a richer and better cultivated district than *Sarkar* Saran is not to be seen in India, the Collector has never been able to realise the revenue of a single year from what should be deemed the resources of the country. In every year from the time Mr. Groeme first took charge of Collectorship (in 1781) one, two, nay sometimes three lakhs (of the collections) were made up by mortgage, conditional sale or by debts contracted with the bankers. of which many were never paid. A remission of the revenue was granted by the Collectors every year". Though the demand from 1780 to 1789 was over nine lakhs, the collections rarely amounted to much more than half of that sum, and were sometimes considerably less. The Gandak embankment had fallen into disrepair, and was not restored till 1796 Meanwhile the northern and eastern parts of the district were swept by floods nearly every year. In the Husepur zamindari, corresponding with the erstwhile Hathwa Raj estate, no one could be got to take up a settlement of the revenue.

To add to the difficulties of the Company's officials it was impossible to collect the revenue in a large portion of the district owing to the attitude of the leading zamindars. Regarding them the Collector writes in 1787: "They have no means whatever of paying their revenue of one year, but by an anticipation of the revenues which ought to be allotted for the ensuing year. The practice has prevailed all over Saran for several and must take some time before it can be entirely removed, but it is so bad with these Narayans that any plan for the realisation of their revenues, which does not immediately remove all anticipations, only serves to render the business move confused and troublesome in the next

year. It must be observed that with these Narayans I conceive when the amount anticipated and the amount of their balances are brought into one sum, that the sale of their whole zamindary will hardly discharge it".

Hathwa Raj was another stumbling block. Due to the recalcitrant attitude of Fateh Sahi, of Hathwa, or as it was then called Husepur practically a state of anarchy ensued in the district. Troops were sent against him and his territory was seized, but the Raja established himself in the large forest between Saran and Gorakhpur, whence he defied all attempts to capture him, and made frequent inroads into British territory. His estate was let out to farmers, but he managed to frustrate their attempts to collect the revenue, and was strongly suspected of having taken part in an affray in which one of them was killed in 1772. The Collector finding it impossible to make collections recommended that the Raja should be pardoned and given an allowance on promising to live quietly at Husepur. This promise the Raja readily gave and as readily broke. He again took the field against the combined forces of the company and the Nawab of Oudh and a series of outrages culminated in 1775 in the murder of his own cousin, Basant Sahi. Government then declared his property forfeit and in 1790 recognised Chatardhari Sahi, the infant grandson of the murdered Basant Sahi, as the owner of the estate. Fateh Sahi himself ended his life as a religious mendicant, a peculiar but not unexpected sequel to a career of a stormy petrel.

Decennial settlement.—In order to improve the land revenue administration Mr. Montgomerie, the Collector of Saran, submitted a proposal for settling the district for a period of ten years. The zamindars at first resisted the proposal. They combined among themselves and frustrated the Collector's estate of which settlement could not be effected with its own proprietors. They also, the Collector discovered, "kept two sets of accounts, the true and just one, which in case of dispossession would be immediately destroyed, and the spurious one offered for the guidance of the former". However, eventually the Collector seems to have tackled the difficulties and succeeded in concluding a satisfactory settlement.

Comparatively little information is forthcoming as to the details of the settlement as most of the papers were burnt in a fire at Chapra in 1792. The unit was the estate and not the village. Enquiries were made for each estate to ascertain the gross produce or *paidawar* including both cash and produce rents and *sairats* paid for fisheries, orchards, grazing land and the like. From this was deducted the *kharcha deh* or collection charges consisting of the salaries of local agents, temple charges, etc., and allowance of ten per cent on the collections left to the proprietors or the *malikana* lands granted to them in lieu of the allowance. The balance left after deducting the *kharcha deh* from the *paidawar* was called the

mofussil jama and was, as a rule settled as the revenue to be assessed. The settlement finally confirmed for the years by the Board in 1790 was as follows :—

Name of pargana.		Total no. of estates.	Total no. of mauzas and kismats.	Total area.			Total jama.
				B.	C.	D.	Rs.
(1) Andar	..	78	278	63,011	11	0	53,463
(2) Bal	..	112	876	2,07,251	16	0	1,77,892
(3) Barai	..	52	294	1,00,864	12	0	69,252
(4) Bara	..	86	349	1,16,598	16	0	97,100
(5) Chirand	..	12	70	23,991	7	0	3,075
(6) Chaubar	..	122	256	47,136	15	0	36,388
(7) Kaliyanpur Khadi		61	872	1,92,479	16	0	95,540
(8) Danghi	..	17	134	38,335	15	0	22,093
(9) Goa	..	223	949	2,37,054	10	9	1,57,073
(10) Manjhi	..	12	52	30,544	18	0	26,530
(11) Makair	..	15	332	71,894	7	0	41,917
(12) Madhal	..	38	202	53,890	5	0	32,651
(13) Narhan	..	29	82	22,017	3	0	20,298
(14) Pachlakh	..	69	240	66,103	5	0	41,526
(15) Sepah	..	33	178	59,854	7	0	45,283
Total	..	959	5,164	13,31,029	3	9	9,20,081

(B—Bigha : C—Catha : D—Dhur.)

Thus the revenue assessed at this settlement was Rs. 9,29,261 payable by 959 estates. The total was almost the same as that of the latest Mughal settlement of 1765 and was more than double that of Todar Mull, but the area assessed had increased nearly six-fold since 1582. The 959 estates in the district were settled with 355 proprietors, of whom the more important was Jag Mohan Mukherji, the farmer of the Hathwa estate, whose revenue amounted to Rs. 1,39,209: the Narayans, the ancestors of the Chainpur family, whose revenue was Rs. 94,098, and the Manjhi Babus, with the revenue of Rs. 75,525.

Permanent Settlement.

The early British revenue administration had been characterised by excessive fluctuations and uncertainties. Unfortunately the justifiable impression was accompanied by another, which can only be described as unwarranted, viz., that the assets of the country had been sufficiently ascertained in the various settlements made since 1765 to permit of the land revenue being permanently settled.

In spite of Sir John Shore's warning in his celebrated minute of 1789 that further experience should be awaited before final measures were adopted, the Governor-General-in-Council recommended the Court of Directors to render decennial settlement permanent. The sanction of the Court was received in 1793. The interval had been occupied by a revision of the decennial settlement of 1790, as several collectors, among whom Mr. Montgomerie of Saran was one of the most prominent seem to have been doubtful as to the expediency of confirming their decennial settlements in perpetuity without a good deal of further inquiry.

In Saran the method adopted for checking the decennial assessment was to compare it with the actual collections of the settlement-holders for 1791 as shown in the *patwari* papers. It appears that the total revenue permanently settled in 1793 was Rs. 10,27,110 or an increase of nearly a lakh over the decennial settlement of 1790. The number of estates permanently settled was 1,818 as against 959 at the decennial settlement.

The following table compares the revenue in each of the 16 *parganas* of which Saran consisted at the permanent settlement with that of the same *parganas* at Akbar's settlement in 1582, at Nawab Hushiyar Jang's assessment of 1773 and at the decennial settlement of 1790 :—

Parganas.	Revenue in rupees.					
	1582.	1773.	1790.		1793.	
			No. of estates.	Revenue.	No. of estates.	Revenue.
(1) Andar	13,374	65,910	78	53,463	119	53,955
(2) Bal	1,22,334	1,84,139	112	1,77,872	333	1.97,562
(3) Barrai	13,345	63,481	52	69,252	96	69,315
(4) Bara	9,594	84,810	86	79,100	167	79,250
(5) Chirand	15,831	33,785	12	30,275	21	30,250
(6) Chanbar	10,000	23,199	122	36,388	143	35,441
(7) Kallyanpur Kundi	19,362	1 15,505	61	95,540	16	99,959
(8) Dangsi	6,940	15,855	17	22,093	47	22,093
(9) Goa	50,323	1,75,371	223	1,57,073	406	1,56,786
(10) Manjhi	15,295	24,321	12	26,530	39	26,530
(11) Makair	20,277	37,502	15	41,917	27	41.917
(12) Madhal	17,543	36,774	38	32,651	59	32,651
(13) Narhan	16,362	22,648	29	20,298	43	20,497
(14) Pachlakh	10,949	52,901	69	41,526	122	42,370
(15) Sipah	7,264	..	33	45.283	24	40,936
(16) Kasmar	32,683	..	..	.	156	77,598
Total	3,81,476	9,36,201	959	9,29,261	1,818	10,27,110

The decrease in revenue between 1773 and 1793 in *parganas* Andar, Bara, Chirand, Mandhal, Narhan and Pachlak is somewhat remarkable and illustrates the leniency with which the permanent settlement was conducted. So late as 1829 the Collector reported that many villages had escaped assessment altogether and even at the time of the revenue survey the district contained no less than 178 estates, which were returned as *zaid fihrist* or outside any list, as they were not entered in either the register of revenue-paying or revenue-free estates. Without expressing any opinion on the controversy as to the advantages and disadvantages of the permanent settlement, it may be remarked that these facts show the incompleteness of the information on which it was conducted in Saran, and the loss which the Government sustained through disregard of Sir John Shore's warning that the time had not come to make a permanent settlement of the revenue.

In connection with the permanent settlement, the main difficulties were about the regular collection of the stipulated dues. These fell heavily in arrears, with the consequence that lands were frequently sold and the ideals of a stable revenue and a set of loyal contented zamindars were not realised to any considerable extent. Another defect of the settlement was the insufficient protection it gave to the tenants against the oppression of the zamindars. The establishment of the law-courts was expected to give the tenants the needed relief, but in practice it proved futile. In the absence of any survey of land and a definite record about the tenure of lands the law-courts could afford but little relief.

It is needless to describe in detail the various measures taken by the successive Governors-General to cope with these serious evils. It will suffice to indicate the main lines of policy adopted by them.

Regulation VII of 1799 generally known as the *Haftam*, was passed in order to remedy these evils. The Collector was given power to attach the zamindar's property immediately if the demand was not paid on the fixed date, while the zamindar was authorised without reference to any court to distrain the property of the *raiyat* in case of any arrears and where the arrears exceeded Rs. 500 to arrest his person. Thus the zamindar was given greater powers as against the *raiyat* than Government ventured to assume to itself as against the zamindar.

The effect of the Regulation was a great and immediate improvement in the collection of the land revenue, and the Collector in 1801 reported that the total arrears due from both Saran and Champaran for the preceding year were only Rs. 1,517 and that the Regulation was ' perfectly well calculated to secure the collection

of the public revenue without in the least degree affecting the security of landed property, and also to enable the zamindars and farmers to realise their rent from the under-farmers and *raiyats* without affording the proprietors and the farmers the means of oppressing their under-farmers and *raiyats*". But the view was too optimistic, and in 1811 the Collector submitted another report in which he mentioned about the oppression of the zamindars.

Regulation V of 1812 modified the stringency of the *Haftam* by rendering only the property and not the person of the *raiyat* liable to seizure for default in payment of rent, but it was soon realised that without a local agency of some kind, it would be impossible to stop oppression. Accordingly Regulation XII of 1817 was passed with the object of reorganising the *patwari* system, but the effect was spoilt by placing the *patwari* under the control of the Collector and the landlord. It is not surprising that the *patwari* practically became the latter's henchman, and instead of being protector of the *raiyats*, he was the instrument through which the zamindar tyranised the *raiyats*.

Attempts were made to compile records of tenure. Regulation VII of 1819 clearly defined the right of the various classes of tenants. Greater power was given to the zamindars to collect revenue from his tenants but in case of failure to pay the annual *jama* he was liable to be arrested and put in the civil jail. The fact that the permanent settlement was made with the zamindars or hereditary proprietors of the land, and not as elsewhere with middlemen and tax collectors, is evident from a report of the Collector, in which he said: "The only instance in *Sarkar* Saran, where the intermediate zamindars have not been treated with, are Husepur and Chaubara. The zamindars of these places have long been dispossessed by order of Government". Thus it is said that in Saran the permanent settlement did not result in the creation of a new landed class, but was made entirely with the old landed proprietors of the country.

It may be mentioned here that the Permanent Settlement acted adversely on the existing cottage industries. The cottage industrialist had no finance to carry on his trade, not to speak of improving it. Foreign consumer goods and particularly cotton goods from Manchester flooded the market and strangled the cottage industries. The poorer sections turned more to agriculture if not as land-owning cultivators as landless ploughmen. The available capital was land-locked. The European Planters stabilised themselves with their resources of large finance, better methods, more technical knowledge and lastly State patronage. They started buying up or taking in lease consolidated blocks of land, put their energy in trade and commerce. The share

of the residents of the district in their concerns was relegated to that of a wage-earner only.

One of the earlier critics of Permanent Settlement was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great Reformer who pointed out that under the Permanent Settlement, the zamindars had increased their wealth, but had made the lot of the *raiyats* miserable. He advocated a reduction of the rent by means of a corresponding reduction in the revenue payable by the zamindars. The consequent loss of revenue he suggested, should be met by a tax upon luxuries or by employing low-salaried Indians as Collectors instead of high-salaried Europeans. The Raja favoured the Permanent Settlement but he rightly urged that the Government should fix the maximum rent to be paid by each cultivator. The views of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were applicable to Saran district as well

The Resumption Proceedings.

In the *Ain-i-Akbari* there is no mention of any *jagir* or revenue-free property in *Sarkar* Saran. At Alivardi Khan's assessment of 1750 it was reported that revenue-free properties capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 13,117 existed, but no arrears or details were given. In Nawab Hushiyar Jang's Register of 1773, 297 villages are recorded as revenue-free.* These were stated to cover an area of 1,13,002 *bighas* and to be capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 59,703. No steps for their resumptions were, however, taken till many years after the Permanent Settlement.

In 1819 Regulation II was passed to facilitate the resumption of revenue-free lands, by transferring the proceedings from the Civil Courts to the revenue authorities. Regulation VII of 1822 was passed to provide that revenue-free properties should be surveyed before they were settled, but the Collector of Saran represented that as the Permanent Settlement had been made without the specification of any boundaries his main difficulty was to ascertain whether a particular area had been included in the Permanent Settlement or not. But in spite of these preliminary measures resumption proceeding remained suspended. The Collector of Saran submitted a statement on the 14th October 1834 estimating that 1,455 *mahals*, covering an area of about 1,56 063 *bighas* were liable to come under resumption, and that they were capable of yielding a revenue of Rs. 1,22,000. At the same time he reported the existing Government revenue to be Rs. 10,37,509 being an increase of Rs. 10,000 on the revenue permanently settled in 1793. No explanation of the increase is given, but it must have been due to the resumption of petty estates prior to the general resumption proceedings concluded in 1841. No final report of these proceedings, which were concluded about 1841,

* "Sarkar Saran" published by Gazetteers' Revision Section, Revenue Department.

has been found, but the following statement has been compiled from an old Persian Register purporting to give the results of all the resumption held under Regulation II of 1819 :—

Parganas.		Villages.	Area in *bighas* resumed.	Revenue assessed.	Incidence per *bigha*.
				Rs.	Rs. a. p.
(1) Andar	..	30	8,432	5,563	0 10 6
(2) Bal	..	38	40,855	33,217	0 13 0
(3) Barai	..	15	4,415	3,609	0 15 4
(4) Barra	..	19	14,514	7,226	0 7 11
(5) Chirand	..	9	2,747	1,546	0 9 0
(6) Chaubar	..	38	14,940	4,859	0 5 2
(7) Dangsi	..	18	22,750	8,805	0 6 2
(8) Goa	..	51	23,867	15,102	0 10 1
(9) Kasmar	..	23	14,958	12,492	0 13 4
(10) Kalyanpur	Khadi	80	17,446	4,890	0 4 5
(11) Manjhi	..	11	20,975	12,620	0 9 7
(12) Makair	..	27	9,673	4,161	0 6 9
(13) Madhal	..	12	6,527	2,276	0 5 6
(14) Narhan	..	9	16,693	7,829	0 7 6
(15) Pachlakh	..	3	861	602	0 11 2
(16) Sepah	..	14	2,671	2,670	0 15 11
Total	..	397	2,22,324	1,27,467	0 8 9

Adding these figures to those returned by the Collector in 1834, we find the total Government revenue in 1841 was Rs. 11,69,976.

Survey and Settlement.

The resumption proceeding was followed by the great revenue survey of 1843-44, which was necessitated by the constant disputes regarding the boundaries of estates and villages, due to the permanent settlement having been effected without any specification of boundaries.

Unfortunately the Revenue Surveyor started without any clear idea as to the distinction between an estate or parcel of land belonging to one set of proprietors responsible for the payment of Government revenue and the village or geographical unit, which might contain several estates or might form a portion of one estate. It is not surprising, therefore, that while too much value cannot be assigned to the village maps of the Revenue Survey, the results of the *Thakbust* survey were hardly so successful. The village maps effectually put a stop to boundary disputes.

Of course neither the Revenue Survey nor the *Thakbust* survey professed to record any particulars regarding the rights and interests of tenants. It was deliberately resolved to make no attempt to collect any statistics of crops or cultivation. This decision was taken mainly on two grounds, firstly, lest the people should be led to imagine that the object of the proceedings was to upset the permanent settlement, and secondly lest the *amins* employed should make the collection of the information a pretext for extortion.

The Revenue Survey in Saran was mainly carried out in season 1843-44, this district being the second in the Patna Division to be taken up. The results are given in the following table :—

Parganas.	No. of estates.	Area. In acres.	Area. In sq. miles.	Revenue.	Incidence per acre.
				Rs.	Rs. a. p.
(1) Manjhi	68	30,907	48.29	32,922	1 1 4
(2) Chirand	71	27,052	42.27	33,129	1 3 6
(3) Kasmar	149	74,219	115.95	1,01,650	1 5 11
(4) Shahpur Munir	1	1,248	2.00	3,730	2 14 6
(5) Makair	275	75,761	118.37	49,007	0 10 4
(6) Goa	698	2,41,676	377.62	1,83,190	0 12 1
(7) Bal	676	2,49,201	389.37	2,42,682	0 15 6
(8) Naihan	83	29,909	46.73	29,176	0 15 7
(9) Barai	241	1,05,507	164.86	78,518	0 11 10
(10) Madhal	157	65,110	101.74	36,598	0 8 11
(11) Dangsi	108	59,003	92.19	34,388	0 9 4
(12) Sepah	195	74,471	116.36	46,180	0 9 11
(13) Kallyanpur Khadi	992	2,70,004	421.88	1,17,030	0 6 11
(14) Pachlakh	195	76,637	119.74	45,757	0 9 7
(15) Bara	360	1,33,482	205.6	93,801	0 11 3
(16) Andar	216	74,537	116.46	64,321	0 13 9
(17) Chanbar	177	83,352	130.23	42,231	0 8 1
Total	4,662	16,72,076	2,609.66	12,84,310	0 11 9 7/10

The figures regarding the number of estates are wrong for the reasons given above. There could not have been more than 3,000 estates in Saran in 1845 and it was not till 1892 that the number reached 4,700. But the area figures are, of course, of the utmost importance for now for the first time we have to deal with acres instead of with one ever varying *bigha*.

Some years after this, it was realised that a fresh survey of *diara* areas was necessary owing to rivers having changed their courses since the Revenue Survey; and in 1863 Government gave orders for a minute

survey of the conterminous villages on both banks of the rivers Ganga, Gogra and Gandak to show the changes which had taken place. The survey of the Ganga and Gogra *diara* was carried out in 1863-64, and that of the Gandak *diara* in 1864-65, but the final adjustment of riverain was not completed until 1869. The results so far as North Bihar is concerned are given in the following table :—

Amount added to the rent roll on account of assessment of the alluvial lands.

District		Settled permanently.			Settled temporarily.			Total.		
		Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Champaran	..	..			72	14	9	72	14	9
Patna	..	4,496	15	6	3,695	3	6	8,192	3	0
Saran	..	18	13	0	5,089	0	0	6,007	13	0
Shahabad	..	1,941	11	6	7,611	6	7	9,553	2	1
Tirhut	..	3,748	11	6	241	0	0	3,989	11	6
Total	..	10,206	3	6	16,709	8	10	26,915	12	4

Amount of riverain remitted on account of diluvian.

District.		Amount of riverain abated on the application of the parties.			Amount of riverain liable to abatement but for which no application has been filed.			Total.		
		Rs.	a.	p	Rs	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
Champaran	..	..			401	13	1	401	13	1
Patna	..	367	3	10	2,418	6	11	2,785	10	9
Saran	..	17,995	6	7	4,329	13	1	22,325	3	8
Shahabad	..	48	9	0	2,901	0	0	2,949	9	0
Tirhut	.	63	0	0	2,648	8	4	2,708	11	4
Total	..	18,471	6	5	12,699	9	5	31,170	15	10

In forwarding this table the Commissioner remarked :—" The results are anything but satisfactory The total revenue gained by alluvian accretion is Rs. 26,915-12-4, while the revenue lost on account of diluvian is Rs. 31,170-15-0, of which Rs. 18,471-6-5 have been already remitted. The abatement in Saran alone amounts to Rs. 17,995-6-7 ".

The second *diara* survey was made in 1882-83 when a cadastral survey was in progress in the districts of Ghajipur and Ballia in the

United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) the opportunity was taken to make a fresh survey of the Ganga and Gogra *diaras*. Great changes were discovered in the course of the mid-stream which was supposed to mark the boundary between Saran and Ballia, and it was reported that many estates settled in Saran were found to be on the Ballia side of the deep channel and *vice versa*. It is impossible to trace the exact effect on the land revenue of the 1882-83 *diara* survey, as no systematic settlement was made of the excess of 4,160 acres then discovered. It was gradually brought under assessment on the expiry of the term of settlement of the temporarily settled estates adjoining it. So far as the land revenue administration is concerned the fixation of mid-stream boundary is not convenient. It might be convenient for criminal jurisdiction. This is also endorsed by Mr. Stevenson Moore's contention that " nothing can be worse than that the jurisdiction should end on a line where landed interests are in a continual state of flux ".

The Modern Period.

This settlement was followed by a settlement of the entire district that started in 1893 and came to a close in 1901. Up to May, 1895, the Saran and Champaran operations were carried on together, but as the work progressed this was found to be unsuitable and Saran Settlement was separated from that of Champaran. The particulars which were required to ascertain the record were as follows :—

(*a*) Name of each tenant. (*b*) The class to which he belongs, that is to say, whether he is a tenure-holder, *raiyat* holding at fixed rates, settled *raiyat*, occupancy *raiyat*, non-occupancy *raiyat*, or under-*raiyat*; and if he is a tenure-holder, whether he is a permanent tenure-holder or not, and whether his rent is liable to enhancement during the continuance of his tenure. (*c*) The situation, quantity and boundaries of the land held by him. (*d*) The name of his landlord. (*e*) The money rent payable, or if a produce rent, the fact that a produce rent is paid. (*f*) The mode in which the rent has been fixed, whether by contract, by order of court or otherwise. (*g*) If the rent is gradually increasing rent, the time at which, and the steps by which, it increases. (*h*) The special conditions and incidents, if any, of the tenantry. (*i*) The name of each proprietor (including rent-free owner) with the character and extent of his interest, and the situation, quantity and boundaries of the proprietor's private lands. (*j*) The name of each rent-free occupant, the situation, quantity and boundaries of the land held by him, and whether he holds rent-free by the permission of the proprietor of the land or of his predecessor in title or independently of such permission.

As in other districts the cadastral and fiscal survey in Saran was preceded by a traverse or boundary survey. According to the traverse survey the total area of the district was 2,780 square miles. The total area traversed, was considerably in excess of the total area of the district. This was due to the extensive overlap survey in the Muzaffarpur, Ballia, Shahabad and Patna districts.

The total area of the district arrived at by totalling the areas for each village is as follows :—

	Square miles.
Area surveyed and settled under the Tenancy Act	2,479.88
Area surveyed under the Survey Act	1.90
Municipal and urban area	4.12
Total	2,674.00

In 1793 *Sarkars* Saran and Champaran formed a single district with 20 *parganas*. *Pargana* Kasmar was transferred from Tirhut early in the last century, and *pargana* Maner subsequently diluviated, and on its reformation was transferred to Patna. In 1865 one of the four Champaran *parganas* Barla was transferred to Muzaffarpur and in the following year the three *parganas* on the east bank of the Gandak were formed into the separate district of Champaran and the remaining constituted the district of Saran.

The subdivision of Siwan dates from 1848, and that of Gopalganj from 1875. The areas of these and of the Sadar subdivision were as follows :—

	Square miles.
Gopalganj	788
Siwan	838
Sadar	1,048
Total	2,674

Gopalganj was divided into two thanas, Siwan into three and the Sadar into five, making ten in all. The following statement will show the area of each thana as then recorded :—

Thana.	Square miles.
(1) Mirganj	437
(2) Gopalganj	351
Total Gopalganj subdivision ..	788
(3) Siwan	331
(4) Darauli	261
(5) Basantpur	246
Total Siwan subdivision ..	838

Thana.	Square miles
(6) Manjhi	145
(7) Chapra	354
(8) Mashrakh	174
(9) Parsa	265
(10) Sonepur	110
Total Sadar subdivision ..	1,048
Total district	2,674

So far as the number of estates and the revenue demand from those estates is concerned it was found that there had been great fluctuations in the number of estates. It was mainly due to partition work. The fluctuations in the number of estates and the total revenue demand during the last twenty-five years are shown in the following statement :—

Year.	No. of estates.	Total revenue demand from those estates.
		Rs.
1876-77	3,873	12,32,237
1877-78	4,015	12,35,035
1878-79	4,039	12,42,125
1879-80	4,069	12,43,562
1880-81	4,099	12,44,380
1881-82	4,132	12,46,027
1882-83	4,179	12,34,626
1883-84	4,207	12,34,002
1884-85	4,239	12,29,859
1885-86	4,293	12,22,682
1886-87	4,374	12,24,141
1887-88	4,451	12,24,556
1888-89	4,491	12.23,478
1889-90	4.559	12.23,266
1890-91	4,620	12,66,528
1891-92	4.703	12,66,788
1892-93	4,854	12,67,723
1893-94	4,936	12,68,136
1894-95	5,023	12,64,996
1895-96	5,091	12,55,055
1896-97	5,152	12,63,571
1897-98	5,230	12,63,317
1898-99	5,311	12,63,861
1899-1900	5,345	12,64,578
1900-1901	5,373	12.63,924

The rise and fall in revenue was mainly due to temporarily settled estates in the *diara*. The district in 1900-1901 contained 25 estates, the property of Government; yielding a revenue of Rs. 11,660. There were also 80 temporarily settled estates with a revenue demand amounting to Rs. 15,000.

Revisional Settlement.

The revisional settlement operations were started in 1915 and came to a close in 1921. The Settlement Officer, Mr. P. N. Gupta has mentioned in his report that "the present proceedings are a revision of the record-of-rights framed 20 years ago". Therefore there is very little scope for detailed discussion like the final report of Mr. Kerr. Regarding land revenue, Mr. P. N. Gupta mentions—

"Saran teems with innumerable petty estates jointly held by a large number of co-sharers who are frequently at feud with each other. The difficulties of the administration of land revenue are also aggravated by the existence of extensive *diara* lands (belonging to the Ganges, the Gandak and the Gogra) with a revenue of an uncertain and fluctuating character. In the latter settlement of land revenue has to be revised almost each year on the basis of local enquiries after the floods have receded. The whole district with the exception of some *diaras* and temporarily-settled villages is permanently settled, and the fluctuation in the revenue demand since 1901 is principally due to the settlements of *diara* lands and temporarily-settled estates from time to time.

The total number of revenue-paying estates was 5,444 in 1901, and in 1910 it increased to 6,076 and in 1920 it swelled to 7,021 mainly owing to the operation of the Batwara Act amongst petty landlords."

The statement below will show the gradual development of the estates and the revenue since 1901 :—

Year.	No. of revenue-paying estates.	No. of temporarily-settled estates.	No. of Government estates.	Total revenue demand.
				Rs.
1901 ..	5,444	76	21	12,63,614
1902 ..	5,491	80	25	12,62,745
1903 ..	5,506	78	23	12,63,101
1904 ..	5,533	13	31	12,64,345
1905 ..	5,576	77	36	12,68,500
1906 ..	5,655	77	39	12,67,055
1907 ..	5,708	77	39	12,66,090

Year.		No. of revenue-paying estates.	No. of temporarily-settled estates.	No. of Government estates.	Total revenue demand.
					Rs.
1908	..	5,744	72	13	12,67,243
1909	..	5,898	69	15	12,66,851
1910	..	6,076	64	18	12,68,388
1911	..	6,139	60	23	12,71,542
1912	..	6,203	59	22	12,70,570
1913	..	6,260	56	25	12,70,153
1914	..	6,364	55	27	12,71,660
1915	..	6,405	49	32	12,71,404
1916	..	6,586	48	31	12,68,506
1917	..	6,703	56	26	12,67,230
1918	..	6,863	59	28	12,68,861
1919	..	6,937	63	26	12,69,934
1920	..	7,021	65	26	12,70,737

The statement below will show the comparative picture of revenue and assets at the time of the Revisional Settlement of Saran of the districts in Bihar :—

District.	Assets.			Revenue.	Ratio of revenue to assets.	Incidence of revenue per acre.
	Cash rent.	Value of produce rent and *Khas* land.	Total.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.		Rs. a. p.
Patna ..	37,98,950	40,24,080	78,22,930	15,20,728	1 : 5	1 2 0
South Monghyr	19,14,033	20,23,008	47,37,031	5,07,307	1 : 9	0 4 4
North Monghyr	18,28,728	11,08,320	29,37,048	3,74,060	1 : 8	0 6 5
Purnea ..	..	..	44,20,306	11,72,863	1 : 4	0 6 2
Bhagalpur ..	40,44,595	22,01,770	62,46,365	5,54,842	1 : 11	0 3 4
Darbhanga ..	53,71,582	16,56,873	70,28,455	7,88,301	1 : 9	0 5 10
Muzaffarpur ..	45,70,010	18,19,500	63,89,510	9,05,128	1 : 6	0 9 11
Saran ..	48,78,060	10,86,584	59,65,644	12,63,924	1 : 4	0 11 10
Champaran ..	29,28,428	10,76,682	40,05,100	5,15,125	1 : 8	0 3 7
Gaya ..	35,63,187	88,12,517	1,23,75,104	14,83,775	1 : 8	0 7 9
Shahabad ..	50,64,208	48,11,131	99,61,773	17,78,578	1 : 6	0 10 5

Thus from the abovementioned analysis of the revenue and assets of the districts of Bihar, it is seen Saran is only second to Patna in order of assessment, the ratio of revenue to assets being 1 : 4 and

the incidence of revenue per acre being Re. 0-11-10. The total revenue in 1920 was Rs. 12,70,737 and assets according to the revisional settlement are as follows :—

	Rs.
Cash rental	51,33,010
Produce-rent and Khasmahal land valued at Rs. 6 per acre.	7,55,562
Miscellaneous collection as *sariat, bazar*, etc. ..	2,94,428
Total	61,83,000

By this process which was adopted by Mr. Sweeney in his Champaran report, the proportion of revenue to assets comes to 1 : 5 rather than 1 : 4.

Rents.—Rents generally remained unchanged since the last settlement (1893—1901). During the revisional settlement the incidence of rent was found to be higher than that of the other subdivisions. The highest rate of rent was Rs. 21-7-0 per acre and was the highest in the district. The incidence of rent had reached the highest pitch in the Siwan and Sadar subdivisions of the district. The average incidence of rent in Saran was Rs. 4-7-0 as against Rs. 4-5-0 in the last settlement and the proportion on the average gross outturn was estimated to be less than one-fifth. The following statement will compare the district rental in the last and the revisional settlements :—

	Cash rental (in Rs.).	Produce rental area (in acres).	Valued at Rs. 6 per acre.	Total.
				Rs.
Last Settlement ..	48,78,960	49,159	2,94,954	51,73,914
Revisional Settlement	51,38,021	42,758	2,55,468	53,88,489

The break-up figures of the rent rates on the different classes of *raiyati* interests at the last and revisional operations as well as the incidence of cash rent per acre in the other districts of North Bihar are given below :—

	Area.	Rent.	Rate.		
	Acres.	Rs.	Rs.	a.	p.
Last Settlement—					
Fixed rates	9,340	30,840	3	4	9
Settled and Occupancy	11,02,382	47,76,731	4	5	4
Non-occupancy ..	14,185	71,389	5	0	6
Total ..	11,25,907	48,78,960	4	5	3

	Area.	Rent.	Rate.
	Acres.	Rs.	Rs. a. p.
Revisional Settlement—			
Fixed rates	9,398	31,488	3 5 8
Settled and Occupancy	11,43,539	50,86,928	4 7 0
Non-occupancy ..	3,855	14,605	3 12 8
Total ..	11,56,791	51,33,021	4 7 0

Average incidence of rent.

Districts.	Average incidence of cash rent per acre.
	Rs. a. p.
Muzaffarpur	3 13 5
Saran	4 7 0 (as attested).
Darbhanga	3 12 4
Champaran	2 2 5

From the above table it is apparent that the incidence of cash rent in Saran was comparatively higher than the other districts of North Bihar.

The settlement operations during 1915—1921 have not been repeated again. The picture that emerged from the revisional settlement practically remained the same till the Congress Ministry formed the Cabinet in 1937. During this period, however, some changes in land had been made to ameliorate the condition of the *raiyat*. *Abwabs* were particular targets and with the growing consciousness of the tenant there was a gradual growing apathy to pay the *abwabs*. The *kisans* had come to realise that they also had a say in the administration. There were several *kisan* agitations in various parts of Bihar led by people like Sahjanand Saraswati, Swami Bhawani Dayal, Ramodar Das (Rahul Sankritayan), Pandit Ramchandra Sharma and others. These agitations focussed the grievances of the tenants in a lucid light and the zamindars tried to counteract the move through the Bihar Land-holders' Association and other aristocratic organisations. It will, however, be a mistake to observe that the zamindars were all engines of oppression. Through State patronage and also voluntarily a few landlords like Hathua had discharged a part of the social obligations by establishing schools, colleges and other charitable institutions.

The next great landmark was the abolition of the zamindaries and the vesting of the estates. It is proper that we should briefly

cover the background even at the risk of some repetition before the zamindari abolition is discussed.

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was the basis of zamindari system in the district of Saran, till the zamindari abolition scheme came into force, as a result of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. At the time of the Permanent Settlement, there were 1,818 estates in the district with the land revenue demand of Rs. 10,27,110. By 1906-07 this number had risen to 5,655 paying a land revenue of Rs. 12,67,055 out of which 5,339 estates with a demand of Rs. 12,33,541 were permanently settled, 77 paying Rs 14,954 were temporarily settled and 39 paying Rs. 18,560 were held direct by Government. In the year 1928-29 the current demand of land revenue was Rs. 12,90,537 payable by 7,977 estates; Rs. 12,30,472 being due from 7,891 permanent settled estates, Rs. 31,932 from 58 temporarily settled estates and Rs. 28,133 from 28 estates held direct by Government. Against the total current demand of Rs. 12,90,537, collection during the said year, that is, 1928-29 was Rs. 12,85,107.

The problems relating to the land revenue system were for many years past engaging the attention of Government as well as the public men in Bihar. After pointing out the serious defects in the zamindari system under the Permanent Settlement of 1793, the Land Revenue Commission of 1938 came to the conclusion that in order to improve the economic conditions of the cultivators the Permanent Settlement and the zamindari system should be replaced by a system under which the Government would be brought into direct relationship with the actual cultivators by acquisition of all the superior interests in agricultural lands. This formed the basis for the Bihar Land Reforms Act of 1950 which, after overcoming all constitutional hurdles in its way, provided for complete abolition of all forms of intermediary interests In pursuance of Government's decision to take over the big estates and tenures having a gross annual income exceeding Rs. 50,000, the following five estates of the district were taken over in the first instance under the provisions of the said Act in the year 1952, viz., (1) Hathwa estate, (2) Hathwa Babu Saheb's estate, (3) Manjha Baripatti, (4) Manjha Manjhalipatti and (5) Manjha Chhotipatti. Subsequently, when the State Government decided to take over the entire zamindari and intermediaries under the provisions of section 3 (*b*) of the Bihar Land Revenue Act, 1950, all the estates and tenures in the district of Saran were notified by one notification and they became vested in the State with effect from the 1st January 1956.

MANAGEMENT (PRESENT SET-UP).

In order to administer the land revenue the district of Saran consequent upon implementation of the zamindari abolition scheme, has been divided into 40 Anchals, viz., (1) Chapra, (2) Revelganj, (3) Manjhi, (4) Sonepur, (5) Taraiya, (6) Mashrakh, (7) Dighwara, (8) Dariapur, (9) Parsa, (10) Amnaur, (11) Ekma, (12) Baniapur,

(13) Jalalpur, (14) Garkha, (15) Marhawrah, (16) Bijaipur, (17) Bhorey, (18) Barauli, (19) Baikunthpur, (20) Kateya, (21) Kuchaikote, (22) Gopalganj, (23) Manjha, (24) Mirganj, (25) Hathwa. (26) Guthni, (27) Mairwa, (28) Ander, (29) Pachrukhi, (30) Goreakothi, (31) Basantpur, (32) Bhagwanpur, (33) Sewan, (34) Barharia, (35) Hussaingunj, (36) Darauli, (37) Siswan, (38) Maharajganj, (39) Duraundha and (40) Raghunathpur.

In each *anchal* there are, on the average, 10 *halkas* and the total number of *halkas* in the district is 400. It was proposed to place one gazetted officer of the rank of Sub-Deputy Collector as Circle Officer in each *anchal* for the revenue administration. Due to paucity of officers, however, it has not so far been possible to post one officer in charge of each *anchal* and some of the officers are in charge of two *anchals* at present but it is hoped that very shortly each *anchal* will have one officer. A Circle Inspector is also posted in each *anchal* to assist the Circle Officer. There are the *Karamcharis* in charge of one *halka* each, for collection of rent and agricultural statistics and other allied work. Rent collection work is also done by *Gram Panchayats* in some areas. At present 210 *Gram Panchayats* have so far been entrusted with rent collection work.

In each subdivision there is a Deputy Collector Incharge Land Reforms and Development who looks after the revenue and development work of the subdivision and assists the Subdivisional Officer in the revenue administration of the subdivision. Similarly an Additional Collector has been posted in the district to assist the Collector in the revenue administration of the district.

Present System of Survey, Assessment and Collection of Land Revenue.

The last revisional survey in the district of Saran took place between the years 1915 to 1921. The revenue assessed according to the last survey was Rs. 12,70,737. The *Karamchari* at the *halka* level is the lowest revenue officer who is primarily responsible for collection of revenue and all other similar Government dues. His work is supervised by the Circle Inspector and the Circle Officer of the area, who are also responsible for collection of revenue, accurate maintenance of accounts and deposit of all money collected by the *Karamchari* into Government treasuries. Collection of rent is also done through the local *Gram Panchayats* on commission basis ranging from 5 to 10 per cent according to the percentage of collection. Incidently it may be mentioned that most of ex-intermediaries have not yet filed their collection papers including *jamabandi* in full, with the result that the management of the vested zamindaris has become an uphill task for the revenue officers.

Diara Villages.

There are about 400 *diara* villages in the district out of which 198 have not yet been surveyed and consequently they have not been

assessed to rent. Administration of the *diara* villages is a serious problem for the district authorities, more so in the case of the villages lying on the border of Ballia and Saran districts. Attempts are, however, being made by the authorities of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Governments to solve this tangle by fixing a permanent boundary between the two States on the basis of the result of Deep-Stream verifications. A conference for the purpose was held at Varanasi on 4th April 1959 in which the representatives of the two States participated, and it is hoped that this long-standing administrative problem will come to an end very shortly.

INCOME FROM LAND REVENUE AND SPECIAL CESSES CONNECTED WITH IT.

After the total abolition of the intermediaries the current annual rental demand of the district in the year 1956 worked up to Rs. 13,27,432 only based on the *jamabandis* filed. This demand, however, went on gradually increasing as and when fresh *jamabandis* were received from the intermediaries and duly accounted for. The demand during the year 1958-59 came up to Rs. 53,01,974.46 nP. as against Rs. 33,86,875 in 1956-57 and Rs. 44,70,548 in 1957-58. The current demand on account of cess during the last three years was as follows :—

				Rs.
1956-57	..	..	..	2,35,302
1957-58	..	..	..	2,87,100
1958-59	..	..	..	3,02,793

The State Government also derived income from settlement of *sairats* of all categories. These *sairats* used to be previously settled by the landlords but have now been vested in the State under the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950. The current demand on this account during the year 1958-59 was Rs. 2,61,100 (up to February, 1959), as against Rs. 3,12,207 in 1956-57 and Rs. 2,74,168 in 1957-58. The *sairat* income includes miscellaneous demand realised from vested *hats, bazars, melas, jalkars* and orchards, etc., and is liable to fluctuation.

Against the demands under different heads mentioned above collections during the last three years were as follows :—

Year.		Rent.	Cess.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1956-57	..	28,31,176	1,74.304	3,05,368	33,10,848
1957-58	..	25,16,891	1,51.197	2,57,169	29,25,257
1958-59	..	32,05,758	1,91,466	2,97,403	36,94,628

LAND REFORMS.

The Government having stepped into the shoes of the ex-landlord it is now question of relation between the Government and the tenant rather than the landlord and the tenant. While all efforts are being made to maintain cordial relation with the tenants, reports are sometimes received that the *Karamcharis* who are in direct touch with the tenants are not always helpful to the tenants Such reports as and when received promptly dealt with by the superior authorities and any attempt on the part of the *Karamcharis* to resort to malpractices or to harass the tenants are drastically dealt with.

Before abolition of the zamindari system a number of measures were adopted to secure the interest of the tenants. Mention may particularly be made of the Rent Reduction Operation, the Rent Commutation Operation, the Bakasht Dispute Settlement Act, 1947, and insertion of a new section, viz., section 48-E in the Bihar Tenancy Act providing for restoration of lands to under-*raiyats* unlawfully ejected. Emphasis has also been put on settlement of lands with the members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes and all efforts are made to settle vacant lands with such persons in the district. 281.30 acres of land (up to March, 1959) has so far been settled with them.

COMPENSATION.

The State Government are under obligation to pay compensation to the ex-intermediaries for their zamindari interests that have vested in the State under provisions of the Bihar Land Reforms Act. Section 32 of the Act accordingly provides for payment of compensation to the ex-intermediaries. As it was not possible for various reasons to pay the final compensation within a short period, provision was also made for making *ad interim* payments under section 33 of the Act. According to this provision, the ex-intermediaries are to receive six-monthly payments at the rate of 3 per cent per annum of the approximate amount of compensation payable where such amount does not exceed Rs. 50,000 and at the rate of 2½ per cent (subject to the maximum of Rs. 62,500 per annum) where the approximate amount exceeds Rs. 50,000.

Since the vesting of estates and tenures in the district of Saran, 27,719 intermediaries have filed the required applications for compensation. Total amount of *ad interim* compensation paid up to 31st March. 1959 works up to Rs. 22,49,046.10 nP. It has not been possible to make final payment of compensation in any case so far as necessary verification of particulars furnished by the ex-landlords could not be finalised.

In the administration of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, certain difficulties were experienced particularly with regard to payment of compensation and with a view to obviate these difficulties the Bihar

Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1958, has been passed by the Bihar Legislature which has received the assent of the President recently. In order to meet cases of delay in payment of compensation under section 32 of the Act a new section, viz., section 32 (A) has been added to provide for payment of a sum not exceeding 50 per cent of the approximate amount of compensation. This provision is expected to give much relief to the ex-intermediaries.

AGRARIAN MOVEMENT—'BHOODAN'.

The *Bhoodan* movement initiated by Shri Vinoba Bhave has made appreciable progress in the district of Saran, which was due to two successive visits of the said leader to this district in the years 1952 and 1954. The Bihar *Bhoodan Yajna* Committee was formed in the year 1955 at the State level. The District Office of the said committee is functioning in this district since the year 1957. Reports available from the said office indicate that till the end of April, 1959, 1,03,902 acres of land have been donated in this district out of which 4,323 acres of land have been distributed among deserving persons till the said period. Total number of *Danpatras* (documents of gift), filed up to April, 1959, came up to 3,750, out of which 2,591 *Danpatras* have so far been confirmed by the revenue officers who have the statutory powers under the Bihar *Bhoodan Yajna* Act, 1954, to deal with the *Danpatras* according to the prescribed manner.

CONSOLIDATION OF HOLDINGS AND PREVENTION OF FRAGMENTATION.

The Bihar Consolidation of Holdings and Prevention of Fragmentation Act, 1956, has been enacted with a view to help consolidation of holdings and prevention of fragmentation thereof. No action in this regard has, however, so far been taken in this district as no areas have yet been selected for the purpose. Government had however, recently called for recommendation for selection of Blocks in the district where the work of consolidation of holdings can be taken up. Guthni Block in Siwan subdivision of the district has accordingly been recommended as Consolidation Block to be taken up during the year 1959-60.

CHAPTER XI.

LAW AND ORDER AND JUSTICE.

Incidence of Crime in the District.

The situation of the district is partially responsible for a comparatively high incidence of crimes. The present district is at one end of the State and has several districts of Uttar Pradesh and Champaran; Shahabad, Muzaffarpur and Patna of Bihar State on her borders. There is a big river front with formidable stretches of *diara* land. Nepal, an independent country, is also quite close to Saran through Champaran. The people are physically strong and adventurous. A border district like Saran will have police problems.

Till 1866 the district of Saran included the present district of Champaran as well. The district at that time was rather unwieldy and the earlier British administrators must have found it difficult to control particularly the areas that now form the fringes of Champaran district on Nepal border. Champaran has always been in close contact with Nepal. As a preventive measure, riverside police-stations and *chowkis* on the border of Champaran and Nepal had been established formerly. The river-front has had to be closely watched in the past. As a preventive measure a number of riverside police-stations, namely, Sonepur, Dighwara, Revelganj, Manjhi, Siwan, Raghunathpur, Darauli and Guthni were established in the earlier days of British administration.

From the police point of view it may be said that the position of the district is such that encourages the activities of inter-district and inter-State criminal gangs. The police headquarters at Chapra has reported that requisitions from the police authorities from different States in India and from different districts of Bihar for apprehension of persons of Saran for alleged criminal activities outside the district are quite common. There is nothing surprising in this as there is a very high incidence of emigration in this district and out of the emigrants there may be some unsocial elements.

The digest of a number of important letters from the earliest British rule till 1866 available in the District Record Room at Chapra was published from the Gazetteers' Revision Section as *Sarkar Saran* in 1956. From a perusal of the digest, it would be seen that during the early days of British administration the incidence of crime in Saran district, as it was, was rather high. Dacoity, robbery, highway robbery with murder, burglary without theft, burglary with theft, theft, cattle stealing with maiming, wilful murder, arson, etc., were very common. The book *Sarkar Saran* also mentions that from 1787 to 1815 the *terai* on Nepal frontier was almost a no-man's land and there used to be frequent inroads into the British zones by the Gurkhas and *vice versa*. Some of the border zamindars worked in

league with the anti-social elements in Nepal frontiers. *Sarkar Saran* mentions "It appears that the frontier villages were armed for defence and *parwanahs* and *istahars* were distributed to the effect that bandits from Nepal should be repulsed. A simple method suggested was that whenever any bandits will appear in any village the inhabitants will beat '*Nekerah*' or large drum by which the neighbouring villages may collect for each other's aid". It appears that in the month of April, 1815, the charges of the Police and the Revenue of the *terai* were made over to Lt.-Col. Bradshaw, the Political Agent of the Governor-General for the Affairs of Nepal. Mr. Elliot, Magistrate of Saran, was informed about it and it was held that "it should be practicable and convenient to introduce the law and regulation of the British Government into the *terai*". The border problem was accentuated by the fact that very often criminals used to run away to the other territory after committing crime.

The district had a good number of highway robberies till the end of the nineteenth century. A notorious gang of criminals known as the *thugs* were chiefly responsible for such highway robberies. There was a sustained operation against the *thugs* who used to prowl about on the roads and get themselves attached to the unsuspecting travellers and after winning their confidence robbed them often after murder. They would also administer poison in food and drink and then victimise the travellers. *Thuggism* in Saran district was particularly mentioned by Col. Harvey, Superintendent of Operations, against *thugs* in his Report in 1864—1866. Harvey's Report makes out that there was no particular caste or community that took to *thuggism*. This crime was more or less followed as a profession by the men of various castes such as Goalas, Dhanuks, Koeris, Dusadhs and Musalmans. Occasionally the *thugs* would combine with the cartmen or with the inn-keeper where the travellers had to stay for rest. At times the *thugs* would dope the cartmen also. There were also flashes of cunning device. One *thug* would pose as a *sadhu* (mendicant) while his accomplices would act as the disciples. A *puja* would be performed near the inn where the travellers would rest. The travellers would be invited to the *puja* and offered drugged *prasad* (offering to God). Bad communication encouraged the *thuggism* and the river banks where usually the road travellers halted were the favourite spots for committing murders. Dopes like *ganja*, *bhang* and *dhatura* were commonly used by the *thugs*. Recently a stone slab was found near Durgawati river in Shahabad district with an inscription in Hindi and Urdu warning the travellers against the *thugs*. This shows that the early British administrators were fully alive to their responsibility and fixed up such stone slabs in the suspected zones.

The *thugs* are an interesting study. B. Z. Goldberg in his book "The Sacred Fire" has mentioned that a *thug* never considers himself a murderer and argues that it is the hand of God that kills the man

and that the *thugs* are mere instruments in the hands of God. The *thug* according to Goldberg believed that his calling was to be a slayer and educated his children carefully to follow the vocation. They were worshippers of *Kali*. It is doubtful if there was a religious background to the extent that Goldberg thinks among the *thugs* of the Saran district. The worship of *Kali* has never been very common in Saran.

The old correspondence makes out river dacoities as a common crime. A Magistrate had to guard the river tracts between Hajipur and the western extremity of the district of Saran. A letter from the Superintendent of Police, dated the 23rd February 1815 mentions that the Council had authorised the entertainment of a Guard Boat, 14 ores each.

The old correspondence volumes in the Record Room from 1823 to 1842 have a number of letters referring to the custom of *sati* which was quite prevalent in Saran district. Regulation XVII of 1829 abolishing the practice of burning alive the widows of Hindu had to be implemented with a certain amount of caution. The police were enjoined to try their utmost to dissuade the woman from becoming a *sati*. The Magistrate of Saran was asked to strictly enjoin the police *darogahs* to proceed immediately on receiving the information of *sati* being likely to occur and prevent the ceremony. Cases of *sati* had to be reported with explanation. The steps taken slowly eliminated the practice. The police had a great responsibility in this manner and very often designing men encouraged *sati* to grab property.

When communications are bad they offer a problem. The roads had to be strictly watched not only against the *thugs* but also against dacoits and thieves, *Murhellahs* or police outposts were fixed at convenient points. From crime point of view some of the high-roads were particularly bad. A part of the high-road passing through the district of Saran to Ghazipore was notorious and the Superintendent of Police of the Lower Provinces on the 14th January 1827 had informed Pringle, Magistrate of Saran, that there was no security of travelling on that part of the road and that had to be removed. The rural police or the *chowkidari* establishment was particularly watched. Extra guards used to be employed known as *Berkandazes*. The *thanadars* had to exchange list of stolen properties. Some *thanas* were more notorious from crime point of view. Some of the letters mention that the *thanadars* were also not above suspicion and at times they used to hold up boats with saltpetre and other merchandise on some pretext or other. In such cases the Magistrate had to intervene when approached and ordered their release.

The incidence of crime in Chapra and Revelganj towns was high. Burglaries and thefts were very large. *Berkandazes* were specially deputed to the *kutcheries*, treasuries and record rooms. From a letter issued by the Commissioner, dated the 16th September

1831, it appears that the Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit, the Provincial Court, the Zillah and the City Judges, Magistrates and Joint Magistrates, the Collectors of Revenue and Customs, the Commercial Residents and the Salt Agents were asked to employ *Berkandazes* for their establishment. The Joint Magistrate was asked to employ *Berkandazes* for the jails and hospitals.

In the nineteenth century till Champaran was separated as a district, cattle lifting was a ticklish problem. Herds of cattle used to be driven out of the district to the jungles of Oudh or Nepal thus rendering their recovery almost impossible. The Nepal frontier was a fertile zone for the cattle lifters and there was frequent correspondence from the Magistrate of Saran with the Resident of Nepal on this subject.

It is of interest that crime statistics were a regular feature of the administration from towards the end of the eighteenth century. The crime statistics used to be scrutinised and comments were communicated. In 1825 only 150 burglaries were mentioned in a report. The comment was that the extremely small number could not be accepted particularly as the district was large and burglaries in the town of Chapra were very frequent. The Magistrate was asked to report whether he was of the opinion that actually burglaries and other heinous offences were being concealed by the police officers, zamindars, *talukdars* or village watchmen. A report to the Registrar, Nizamat Adalat, dated the 1st September 1830, gives the following statistics :—

Description of crime.	From January to June, 1829.	From January to June, 1830.
Dacoity with wounding ..	1	0
Highway robbery ..	0	1
Highway robbery with murder	102	51
Burglaries without theft ..	213	129
Burglaries with theft ..	53	34
Cattle stealing with wounding	35	66
Wilful murder	0	1
Arson	2	0

The crime statistics quoted above could be compared with the earlier comparative statement for 1821 and 1822 which runs as follows :—

Crime statistics.	1821.	1822.
Highway robbery	12	3
Burglary	296	262
Cattle stealing	97	109
Theft	95	122

Although it is clear that not absolute reliance could be put on the statistics but they do indicate the trends to some extent.

The crime position of the district during the second half of the nineteenth century can be appreciated from Hunter's *Statistical Account of Saran District*, published in 1877. He mentions that "During the year 1872, 3,976 'cognisable' cases were reported to the Police, of which 178 were discovered to be false. Convictions were obtained in 737 cases, or 19.40 per cent of the 'true' cases; the number of persons actually brought to trial was 1,830 of whom 1,017 or 55.57 per cent were convicted. In the same year the number of 'non-cognisable' cases was 1,484; the number of persons who actually appeared before the court being 2,029, of whom 1,283 or 63.23 per cent were convicted. The total number, therefore, of both 'cognisable' and 'non-cognisable' cases in 1872 was 5,460; and the total number of persons convicted of an offence, under either of these heads, was 2,300 or .11 per cent of the total district population.

Serious crime is not very prevalent in Saran. In 1870, 11 cases of murder took place, and 11 persons were arrested; the percentage of persons convicted to persons brought to trial was 70. In 1871, the number of murders was 4 in all of which convictions were obtained. In 1872, however, out of 7 murders known to have been committed, in 2 only were convictions obtained. In 1870, there were 9 cases of dacoity or gang robbery, in 1871 only 6; 5 cases of rape were reported in 1870, against 3 in 1871. Out of the 6 cases of dacoity in 1871, convictions were only obtained in 3: but in 1872, out of 5 dacoities only 1 resulted in conviction. The cases of house-breaking increased from 1,192 in 1870 to 1,223 in 1871, and to 2,505 in 1872. The cause of the increase in 1871 is said to be the distress which was the result of the large destruction of crops by floods, combined with the miserably insecure state of the houses. The principal crime in Saran is criminal house-trespass, usually committed by Magahiya Doms, the most criminal caste in the district, whose motions it is difficult to watch, as they have neither houses nor lands. In 1870, 119 cases of riot were investigated, against 109 in 1871; and convictions obtained in 62.5 per cent. The offence of 'grievous hurt' showed a decrease of 50 per cent in 1871 as compared with 1870. Convictions were obtained in 30 per cent of the cases decided in 1871, the percentage of persons convicted to persons brought to trial being 65.38. Cases of hurt by dangerous weapons increased from 8 in 1870 to 12 in 1871, convictions being obtained against 66.6 per cent of the number of persons tried. In 1870, all who were tried were convicted, cases of abduction or kidnapping fell from 4 in 1870 to 3 in 1871; and the percentage of convictions to persons brought to trial also fell from 100 per cent to 80. Highway robberies numbered 7 in 1870 and 8 in 1871; other robberies 17 and 8, respectively. In 1870 the percentage of persons convicted in cases of highway robbery to persons brought to trial was 100; while in 1871 it fell to 33.3.

In other robberies, the percentage of convictions to persons brought to trial also fell from 100 in 1870 to 42.18 in 1871. Cattle-theft cases numbered 32 in 1870, and 17 in 1871, in this latter year the proportion of persons brought to trial was 88.23 per cent."

The old records do not show much change in the first decade of the twentieth century so far as crimes are concerned. The commonest crimes were as before—burglary, theft, cattle lifting, rioting, dacoity and murder although cases of *thuggism* and forced *sati* had disappeared. In the quinquennium ending in 1904 there were more cases of rioting in Saran district than in any other districts of the Patna Division excepting Champaran. The cases of rioting were mostly connected with land disputes. In that quinquennium there were 6,773 burglary cases. The incidence of dacoities and robberies had, however, gone down to some extent. The district had gangs of professional criminals. They used to move out of the districts as well. Infanticide was unusually common although the figure was only 52 in the decade ending in 1905. The only other district which had a similar figure was Shahabad with 50 cases in that decade. Infanticide has now been stamped out.

In the revised *District Gazetteer of Saran*, published in 1930, Mr. A. P. Middleton, I.C.S., had discussed the trends of crime in the later years and had mentioned as follows :—

> "The commonest forms of crime are burglary, theft and rioting. In the quinquennium 1919—1923 there were 8,231 cases of burglary but in that from 1924—1928 the number had dropped to 5,008. Ahirs are both the most numerous and most criminal of all castes in the district with the exception of Magahiya Doms referred to later. Docoities are not numerous and are confined almost entirely to the border of the Gorakhpur district where notorious gangs reside. The district is well known for its riots which frequently end in loss of life owing to the free use of spears by all classes. In the quinquennium 1918—1923 there were 187 riots and in that from 1924—1928 there were 166. These figures do not, however, give the true position as how many riots are classed under murder. Murders are not unduly numerous considering the density of the population but a special feature is the number of cases of infanticide by mothers which in the quinquennium 1924—1928 totalled 29. Kidnapping of, and trafficking in, girls for marriage is fairly common and the gangs operating have connections with Patna and Shahabad districts."

Before we discuss the incidence of crime in the last two decades it is necessary to dispel the idea that there should be anything now as a criminal tribe or caste. Hunter in his *Statistical Account of Saran* published in 1877 had mentioned that certain castes were criminal

class. He groups Dosadhs, Ahirs and Magahiya Doms as the criminal classes and mentions that the first two monopolise the post of Chowkidar thus illustrating the good old adage "to catch a thief, one has to employ a thief". In his Statistical Account while discussing the criminal statistics Hunter had also referred to the Magahiya Doms as "the most criminal caste in the district, whose motions it is difficult to watch, as they have neither houses nor lands". Without entering into the question whether Hunter was fully justified in making these sweeping observations one can say that the observation would not be appropriate at all at the present moment. There is no doubt that the Magahiya Doms in Hunter's time were more or less of gipsy habits and they made a precarious living by their basket-weaving, rope-making, etc. Their economic condition was so bad that Mr. Bayley, the Commissioner of the Patna Division, was quoted by Hunter as remarking that the Magahiya Doms were less removed from the lower animals than any caste in India. Bayley also observes that their one occupation was stealing and they committed burglaries, highway robberies and petty thefts. But Bayley also observes that the Magahiya Doms were utilised by the petty zamindars who received the proceeds of their robberies. There is no doubt that the backwardness and low economic condition of the Magahiya Doms was utilised by the richer and anti-social elements.

Hunter thought that it was very difficult to keep them under strict surveillance. Mr. Drummond, the Collector of Saran, had advocated the scheme of collecting them together at one place and forming them into an industrial colony. This experiment was later tried and the Magahiya Doms were brought under the ambit of the Criminal Tribes Act. According to the Criminal Tribes Act the Magahiya Doms had to notify their movements and had to take permission of the police authorities for moving out of their colony. They had to be strictly watched and night patrol was to take their attendance (*hazri*). As a matter of fact the Magahiya Doms were treated as if they were born thieves and dacoits. The Criminal Tribes Act was abrogated in 1950.

Regarding Hunter's observations about the other castes such as Dosadhs and Ahirs as criminal classes based on jail statistics of 1872 as mentioned in his *Statistical Account of Saran District*, there are sound reasons to differ. Hunter only took the number of Ahirs, Rajputs, Doms, etc., in the jail at Chapra in 1872. He did not analyse the reasons why they were in jail. A riot case for a land dispute might have put 20 or 30 men belonging to a particular caste into the jail in that year. It would be unscientific to come to any conclusion about the criminality of a caste by merely taking the proportion of each caste in the district population and the proportion of that caste along with the total number in jail. It has also to be recollected that in 1872 the poorer class had not much means to engage lawyers to defend themselves. As a matter of fact even in our own days a poor man is often undefended and goes to the jail

because he cannot afford to engage any lawyer. It will be a fiction to assert that there is any criminal class in this district or as a matter of fact in any of the districts in Bihar.

Regarding the Magahiya Doms Mr. A. P. Middleton in the *District Gazetteer of Saran,* published in 1930, observes : "A criminal tribe known as Magahiya Doms migrated to Saran at an unknown date from the west. The men are bold and skilful burglars and thieves while the women are equally criminal though as a rule they confine their activity to the obtaining of information of likely places to burgle and for this reason visit villages begging or selling articles made out of split bamboo. They also prostitute themselves so as to gain access to houses for this purpose. When the men are absconding for the purpose of committing crime they keep in touch with their women who generally take food to them in their hiding places in high standing crops or jungle. The men carry a broad thick and slightly curved knife called a *Kata* which they are very expert in cutting through the walls of houses for burglary. They prefer to cut a small hole by the side of a door (known as a *bagli*) through which the hand is inserted to draw back the bolt. They also use other house-breaking instruments to mislead the police investigation and divert attention from themselves.

Surveillance over these Doms is difficult and this was realised as far back as in 1882 when the then Magistrate Mr. Henry concentrated them in three or four large settlements, where they were given land to cultivate and a small special police force was sanctioned for surveillance. In the following year Major Skinner, the District Superintendent of Police, took up and further developed the scheme of reclamation by trying to settle the Doms permanently on the land. In Champaran where these Doms live a wandering gipsy life they were collected and restricted in settlements but in Saran where, owing to the density of the population they had not been so free to roam and had settled near villages, it was considered advisable to leave them in small groups so that they might be more attached to their village and acquire the idea of becoming cultivators with a stake in the land. There was also the difficulty of the cost of acquiring large blocks of land for permanent settlements.

Government approved of the scheme which was worked out with energy by Major Skinner; the salient points were to give adult Doms small quantities of land in their villages to encourage them to take to agricultural pursuits; to give them presents of poultry, pigs, goats, etc., to make a start in life and to induce them to increase their stock so as to assist them to earn an honest livelihood and to find employment for them in the neighbourhood of their villages. The scheme has been further developed as additional land has been obtained by acquisition, by free gifts by zamindars and by grant at a low rental. The Doms have also been provided free with agricultural implements and plough-oxen. From time to time industrial

schools to teach weaving *durries* and *newar* and for cane work have been started.

It must be admitted that these efforts at reclamation have met with little success though the young generation, now growing up, who attend the local schools do take an interest in education and so much good has been done that the older men have been made to work.

There are 23 settlements known as *paraos* and at 21 of these beat-houses are maintained where a constable of the special force is posted for surveillance and to make the Doms work in their fields. The special force consists of 1 Inspector, 2 head constables and 21 constables. The total population of Doms is 1,087 and they cultivate 440 *bighas* of land. The Doms were declared a criminal tribe in 1913 and since the following year all adults, male and females, are registered under section 10 (*a*) and (*b*) of the Criminal Tribes Act. Though this has enabled the police to keep them under better control their continued hereditary criminal habits led to the further restriction of the worst characters under section 11 of the Criminal Tribes Act ".

Mr. Middleton mentions another "criminal class" that of Palwar Dusadhs of Ballia district who migrated from there and had settled in Saran. It was mentioned about them :—

> "They also have been registered under the Criminal Tribes Act but the majority of them are well behaved and have been exempted from surveillance, the exception being a few very active members residing in Ekma police-station. These people generally go to the districts of Eastern Bengal and Assam for their criminal raids."

That there are anti-social elements within the district and that such elements from outside the district consider Saran to be a fruitful field for their operation is shown by the general upward trend in some of the types of crimes particularly from 1942 to 1957 when the hands of the police were quite full with general law and order problem. Criminals within this district and the inter-provincial gangs had become active during this period. Strict measures had to be taken and the upward trend was curbed.

The police administration faces a problem created by the abrogation of the Criminal Tribes Act in December, 1950. As mentioned before Saran has been a district where there are quite a few settlements of Magahiya Doms. The abrogation of the Criminal Tribes Act deprived the police of their executive control over the Doms. According to the police report the Doms became active and there was again an appreciable rise in dacoities and other crimes in 1951-52. In 1953, however, there was a very remarkable decrease and the police could claim this improvement due to its

crime-controlling measures, anti-crime operations and successful detection and prosecution of important gangs. The convictions of a number of gangs were secured during this period. Important gangs were rounded up during this period. The Dom criminals whose activities got an encouragement by the abrogation of the Criminal Tribes Act were also brought under some control by the usual police surveillance. A few extra constables and Sub-Inspectors of Police were drafted to keep such surveillance over the Dom colonies. Gambling is not much of a problem in this district. Border raids are also absent. Sex crimes are not very common. The figure for rape reached its maximum in 1954, that is, 10 as against 2, 5 and 4 in 1951, 1952 and 1953, respectively. Kidnapping or forcible abduction cases are, however, more numerous. The maximum figure was reached in 1955, that is, 33 as against 32, 17, 25 and 19 in 1951, 1952, 1953 and 1954, respectively. The scarcity of food, rapid increase of the population, unemployment and high prices of food-grains have made the crime position more complicated in the district. Saran is a deficit district so far as supply from within is concerned and as mentioned earlier has a very heavy density of population. The retrenchment of the rural police by 30 per cent has been another obstacle which the police had to face in its crime control measures since 1950-51. The village force under the *Gram Panchayats* is an innovation and has supplemented the ordinary police force.

Comparative crime figures from 1942 to 1957 under murder, dacoity, robbery, burglary, theft and riot are given below :—

Years.	Murder.	Dacoity.	Robbery.	Burglary.	Theft.	Riot.	Total.
1942 ..	30	263	25	1,575	551	70	2,514
1943 ..	29	251	40	1,657	633	74	2,634
1944 ..	36	96	20	1.128	645	66	1,991
1945 ..	26	59	25	1,007	446	65	1,628
1946 ..	59	133	31	1,488	591	176	2,478
1947 ..	40	151	35	1,761	719	127	2,833
1948 ..	39	115	37	1,660	639	122	2,612
1949 ..	44	79	34	1,466	680	106	2,409
1950 ..	53	74	50	1,516	731	125	2,549
1951 ..	46	126	60	1,813	790	113	2,948
1952 ..	52	134	42	1,843	827	126	3,024
1953 ..	53	81	28	1,553	785	86	2,586
1954 ..	49	85	41	1,607	763	103	2,648
1955 ..	43	49	37	1,140	651	121	2,041
1956 ..	46	47	35	1,283	729	173	2,353
1957 (up to 31st October 1957).	42	50	32	1,093	629	116	1,962

The main trend of events from 1942 onwards could be briefly indicated. In 1942 the "Quit India" movement was launched against the British Government in India. The arrest of a few Indian leaders of the first rank was followed by a mass movement to paralyse the Government. Many of the local leaders went underground and cases of sabotage, arson, tampering of railway lines or telegraph lines became quite common. Attempt was also made to burn down Government institutions like thanas, etc. Such acts were naturally considered as crime and the authorities had tried to meet the situation with an unusual firmness. The military had to be brought in to aid the civil administration. There were cases of firing on the mob and even on the students. Mass arrests became a common feature. Communications that were tampered with were quickly restored and normal conditions were brought back.

With the restoration of normal conditions punitive taxes were imposed on villages which had taken a prominent part in such subversive acts. For some time the hands of the administration were very full in realising punitive taxes and the police had a very unpleasant task.

In the last three decades the role that the police had to play in Saran district has been as difficult as their counterpart in other parts of the State. During the height of the Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience Movements, the police had a delicate task. Their task became all the more difficult because they had to work against their own kith and kin and many of the well-known people of the district who had thrown themselves in the movements. But loyalty has been the hall mark of the police services. The same police force rallied their strength to fully implement the policy of the first Congress Ministry. The already overstrained police forces gave a good account of themselves in 1942 movement and after. They also had to face the communal troubles which brought in crimes from different inspiration in 1946. There was a wave of communalism in the State and Saran was also affected. Arson, kidnapping, assault and even murder were some of the shapes of the crime in the wake of communal disturbances in 1946. Immediately after, came the Independence of India and the formation of the Congress Ministry in Bihar.

With Independence in the country and the setting up of the Congress Ministry in Bihar there has been a change in the character of the State. The police is no longer meant only for law and order but the police have a vital role to play in bringing about a well-patterned Welfare State. The police force has had to expand enormously with the changing times. The transition period has naturally brought in a lot of extra problems for the administration. The expansion of the police has been a necessity not only for maintaining law and order but also for keeping up the Welfare State well moored

The recent broad-based administrative changes have put a great strain on the police force. The Constitution of India, promulgated in 1950, laid down two fundamental innovations, universal adult suffrage, and legal abolition of untouchability. India is now the greatest free democracy in the world. The district of Saran has, as observed before, an intense density of population and the problem brought in by the granting of universal adult suffrage has been observed to be a huge uncharted sea, and in some respects entirely revolutionary. That the vote of a so-called "untouchable", or a scavenger will have the same value as that of an educated Brahmin is something that cuts through one thousand years of the Indian life. There have been two general, several bye-elections and several elections for other bodies since 1950. The police forces have conducted themselves with very great credit during the elections. Their task at such time is extremely delicate and requires tact and firmness. The election offences have been remarkably few in comparison to the vast electorates.

It is true that the abolition of untouchability by law, a very bold piece of legislation, has not been able to liquidate that vast, complicated, social, economic and psychological structure known as the caste system. As a matter of fact the legal abolition of untouchability is not meant to do away the caste system by one stroke. But this piece of legislation was a necessity to bring a social equilibrium and adjustment of social values so very necessary in a socialistic Welfare State. In this matter also the police forces have their responsibility. The police force is now made up of various components and they have to implement the State policy regarding removal of untouchability. The outlook of the police has distinctly changed towards the so-called untouchables and the Harijans.

In a Welfare State the police is not meant for enforcing law and order only. The help of the police is sought to fight epidemics, distribute ration, meet demands of supply, and so on. In the near future the police will have to be called upon to meet the other problems of the district, production of food and fighting poverty. These are all facets of one great problem, that the human factor, the population which is increasing so rapidly that growth in material resources can scarcely catch up. The economic planning has to be revised from time to time. The police has to fit into the scheme.

There has been a revival of the age old political and administrative units at village level. The State Government have already covered a great part of the district under the administration of this statutory *panchayat* and there has also been a large number of non-statutory *panchayats* working within the district. These *panchayats* which may be loosely described as village republics are now decentralised administrative units with very wide powers covering all that constitutes life in the rural area. The scheme of the Government began work with faith in the people and by all accounts it has made

a success of the programme. The *panchayats* are working as complete democratic units of the administration at the village level for co-ordinating and implementing the social, economic and cultural programmes in the First and Second Five-Year Plans. They have their own officers working under the order of the local *panchayat* directorate. The police have to fit into this scheme of work. There has to be a harmonious blending of the time old police forces in the district meant for the rural areas and these village voluntary forces. It is only expected that it will take time to make an adjustment and it is on its way.

The village judiciary and the village voluntary force should not be taken as curbing the inherent power of the police. The police continue to play their exacting role in detecting crime and bringing the offender to book. At some places the village *panchayats* have not functioned as successfully as expected. But the value of the *panchayats* dispensing justice in smaller cases outside the law court with the minimum cost has its great advantage. The working of the State law for *panchayats* has revealed certain gaps in the original Panchayat Raj Act. These have conflicted with the wider laws operable only by the police authorities. Modifications in the Panchayat Act are under contemplation and the minor clashes between the *panchayats* and the police regulations and the psychological barricades between the executives of the *panchayats* and the over-riding authority of the police are expected to be removed soon.

Police Organisation.

The set up of the organisation of the Police Department at different periods will be of interest. In his *Statistical Account of Saran District*, published in 1877, Hunter mentions that for police purposes Saran had ten police thanas, six of which Chapra, Dighwara, Parsa, Manjhi, Basantpur and Masrakh were in the Sadar subdivision while the remaining four Siwan, Darauli, Baragaon and Barauli were in the Siwan subdivision. Hunter had observed that it was under contemplation to re-arrange some of these thanas. In his time the size of thana's jurisdiction varied from 116 to 422 square miles and the population from 1,07,338 to 2,82,185. The largest thana in Hunter's time was Baragaon and the most populous Siwan.

Hunter had mentioned that at the end of 1872 the regular police consisted of one District Superintendent on a salary of Rs. 600 a month, five subordinate officers on a salary of upwards of Rs. 100 a month, 69 officers on a salary of less than Rs. 100 a month, 333 Foot Police Constables on an average pay of Rs. 6 a month. The total cost of the regular police of Saran district including pay, travelling allowances, office establishment, etc., for the year 1872 came to Rs. 5,825-5-4 a month. According to these figures there was one police man to every 6.5 square miles of the district area or to every 5,058 of the population. The urban police was described by Hunter as the municipal police. It consisted, at the end of 1872, of

11 officers and 162 men, maintained at a total cost of Rs. 1,102 a month defrayed by means of rates levied upon householders within municipal limits. The three municipalities of Chapra, Siwan and Revelganj had a total population of 70,801 and there was one policeman to every 409 persons. In 1871 Chapra had 8 Head Constables and 100 men, Revelganj, 2 Head Constables and 37 men and Siwan, one Head Constable and 28 men.

The rural police in 1872 numbered 6,067 persons maintained either by the zamindars or by service lands held rent-free at an estimated total cost of Rs. 4,601 a month. Compared to the area and population there was one village watchman or Chowkidar to every .44 square mile of the district area and one to every 340 of the population. Each village watchman had charge of 41 houses on an average and received an average pay in money or land of 12 annas a month or 18 shillings a year. The majority of the village watchmen belonged to two of the most criminal castes in the district, according to Hunter, Ahirs and Dusadhs. Hunter agreed that the District Magistrate who had reported that the Chowkidar should receive his pay regularly from Government and not from the landed proprietors and that if not regularly paid they would have no inducement to disclose their knowledge of who had committed crimes which they were presumed to know.

Hunter had calculated that including the regular police the municipal police and the village Chowkidars, the entire machinery for protecting personal property in Saran district consisted at the end of 1872 of 6,648 men of all ranks equal to one man to every .39 square mile of the district area, or one man to every 310 of the population.

The *Revised District Gazetteer of Saran*, published in 1930, does not cover the police organisation with as much thoroughness. It was, however, mentioned:—

" The table below shows the police-stations in the district. Many of these were originally outposts and as they grew in importance were raised to the status of independent police-stations. The police force in 1929 consisted of a District Superintendent of Police in charge with a Deputy Superintendent at headquarters as an Assistant and another Deputy Superintendent at Siwan to supervise the work of the police in the Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions. The sanctioned strength in addition is 1 Sergeant-Major, 6 Inspectors, 53 Sub-Inspectors, 76 Head Constables and 584 Constables. Of these 4 Head Constables and 50 Constables from the armed reserve. The Sadar subdivision is divided into two circles and the Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions each form one, which are each in charge of one Inspector. The total sanctioned strength of the regular police is, therefore, 723 being one policeman to every 3,236 persons and to every 3.7 square miles. The rural force for the watch and ward of villages

which is maintained by the Chowkidari tax consists of 3,977 Dafadars and Chowkidars. The following are the police thanas in the district :—

Chapra Subdivision—(1) Chapra town, (2) Chapra Mofussil, (3) Mirzapur, (4) Masrakh, (5) Baniapur, (6) Garkha, (7) Parsa, (8) Dighwara, (9) Sonepur, (10) Revelganj, (11) Manjhi, (12) Ekma, (13) Siwan, (14) Mairwa, (15) Guthni;

Siwan Subdivision—(16) Darauli, (17) Raghunathpur, (18) Siswan, (19) Maharajganj, (20) Barharia, (21) Basantpur, (22) Gopalganj, (23) Mirganj, (24) Bhore;

Gopalganj Subdivision—(25) Katea, (26) Kuchaikot, (27) Baikunthpur, (28) Barauli."

Regular Police.

For police purposes, the district now has a Superintendent of Police as its administrative head who is under the administrative control of the District Magistrate of Saran and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police, Northern Range, with headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The head of the Police Department is the Inspector-General of Police who has his headquarters at Patna. The police district of Saran is divided into the subdivisions of Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj. Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions are put in charge of a Deputy Superintendent of Police while the Sadar subdivision is directly under the Superintendent of Police assisted by two Deputy Superintendents of Police posted at the headquarters. There are five Police Circles each placed under the administrative charge of one Circle Inspector. They are as follows :—

(1) Circle 'A'—(1) Town police-station, (2) Chapra Mofussil police-station, (3) Bhagwan Bazar police-station, (4) Revelganj police-station, (5) Manjhi police-station;

(2) Circle 'B'—(6) Sonepur police-station, (7) Dighwara police-station, (8) Garkha police-station, (9) Marhowrah police-station, (10) Masrakh police-station, (11) Parsa police-station;

(3) Siwan—(12) Siwan police-station, (13) Mairwa police-station, (14) Guthni police-station, (15) Raghunathpur police-station, (16) Darauli police-station (17) Barharia police-station, (18) Andar police-station;

(4) Gopalganj—(19) Gopalganj police-station, (20) Mirganj police-station, (21) Kateya police-station, (22) Bhorey police-station, (23) Kuchaikote police-station, (24) Barauli police-station, (25) Baikunthpur police-station;

(5) Maharajganj—(26) Maharajganj police-station, (27) Basantpur police-station, (28) Siswan police-station, (29) Ekma police-station, (30) Baniapur police-station.

Each police-station is generally manned by one Sub-Inspector of Police (Officer-in-charge), one Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police, one Writer Constable, one Literate Constable and 8 Constables. But it varies according to the size and necessity of the police-station. In heavy police-stations 2, 3 or 4 Sub-Inspectors of Police and similar number of Assistant Sub-Inspectors of Police are posted.

Besides the police-stations there are 16 permanent and 1 temporary Town Outposts in the district which are as follows :—

Chapra Town	4 *plus* 1 (temporary).
Bhagwan Bazar	6
Revelganj	2
Siwan	3
Gopalganj	1

Each Town Outpost is manned by one Havildar and 10—12 Constables. The Armed Police Section consists of 327 persons. There are 669 unarmed constables for the district.

Besides the above regular police force, there are 247 Dafadars and 2,620 Chaukidars on the roll who are required to collect intelligence and communicate it to the officers-in-charge of the police-stations and to prevent and detect crime, etc.

There are seven posts of Steno. Assistant Sub-Inspectors who are placed under the Deputy Superintendents of Police and in the courts for copying judgments and case diaries, etc. They are on temporary basis.

There is one post of District Prosecutor and six posts of Assistant District Prosecutors posted to each subdivisional headquarters. They conduct the criminal cases in the district. Though their ranks are those of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, their cadres are different. Siwan court has one District Prosecutor and one Assistant District Prosecutor while Gopalganj and Sadar have one and four Assistant District Prosecutors, respectively.

Anchal Police.

There is one Anchal force functioning in the district purely on temporary basis. They are mainly utilised in collection of revenues by the Zamindari Circle Officers, distribution of *taccavi* loans, and relief measures, etc They are employed by the Superintendent of Police in consultation with the District Magistrate. This force consists of 18 Havildars and 125 Constables in this district.

Recruitment.

Regarding the recruitment of Police, the Superintendent of Police is concerned only with the recruitment of constabulary who are appointed from all communities if available—the Harijans being given preference. The other higher ranks are appointed by the Deputy Inspector-General of Police or a Board.

LITERACY.

Nearly 55 per cent of the constables are literate and 45 per cent illiterate. All efforts are made to increase the percentage of literacy among the constables by holding classes in the police lines as well as in the police-stations at regular intervals.

HOME GUARDS.

The Bihar Home Guard Force was organised in 1948. They were enrolled according to the Home Guards' Rules.

The Home Guards have been enrolled from almost all parts of the district and they have been imparted training in the use of rifles. *lathi*, archery, fire-fighting, first-aid, drill, traffic-control, field craft, musketry, etc., at the Central Training Camp, Bihta.

The sanctioned strength of Home Guards of this district is 400 but at present only 391 Home Guards are on effective strength.

The Home Guards are volunteers and whenever they are at home, they render service on no-cost basis. They are utilised in organising village resistance groups. They perform social services also in their own and neighbouring villages and send information regarding crime and criminals or any breach of peace to the nearest police officer. In emergency, they are utilized by the Government in maintaining law and order and for that period they get allowances, etc., according to the scheduled rate as fixed by the Government. They are controlled by the District Home Guard Office with the following paid staff under direct control and supervision of the Superintendent of Police :—

The paid staff of Home Guard Section consists of four District Company Commanders, one Havildar Clerk and one Orderly Sepoy.

TOTAL POLICE STRENGTH.

The present sanctioned strength of district police force consists of 1 Superintendent of Police, 3 Deputy Superintendents of Police, 1 Sergeant-Major, 6 Inspectors, 3 Sergeants, 64 Sub-Inspectors, 64 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 1 Jamadar, 41 Havildars, 996 Constables, 1 Head Clerk, 1 Accountant, 23 Clerks and 1 Daftary. The other temporary posts existing in the district include one Building Inspector of Police, whose duty is to look after the buildings and to be in charge of departmental construction of quarters, 2 Stenographers who are of the rank of Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police. The Anchal Police consisting of 13 Havildars and 125 Constables are also on temporary basis. These figures could be compared with the figures mentioned by Hunter which comprised the police force at the end of 1872 as mentioned before. It will be seen that the rural police in 1872 numbered 6,067 persons maintained either by the zamindars or by service lands but at present the rural police consist of 2,620 Chaukidars and 247 Dafadars. It may safely be surmised that the larger

number of rural police maintained by the zamindars or by service lands were far less amenable to control than the present set of Chaukidars and Dafadars who are on monthly pay basis.

In 1872 there were only 333 Foot Police Constables. The present strength consists of 996 Constables including 327 Armed Police. The number of the men at the top has also gone up very considerably. Hunter had mentioned about 5 subordinate officers on a salary of upward of Rs. 100 a month. The pay of a Sub-Inspector of Police is above Rs. 100 now. There are, as mentioned, 64 Sub-Inspectors of Police besides a number of Sergeants, Inspectors and Deputy Superintendents of Police.

The other allied wings of the district police force are the Railway Police and the Anti-Corruption squad. The Railway Police works under the Superintendent of Railway Police with his headquarters at Samastipur. Sections of them move in the running trains and some are posted at the railway stations. The railway administration maintain a separate Watch and Ward Department particularly for their goods sheds. The Anti-Corruption Department (State) works under an officer in charge of the Department who has his headquarters in Patna. The Intelligence Department of the Police have also its section working within the district. For apparent reasons they work mostly underground. As prohibition has not yet been introduced there is no prohibition squad. But the Excise Department maintain their own staff to keep watch on anti-social activity with regard to excisable articles.

JAILS AND LOCK-UPS.

Before describing the present Jails and Lock-ups in Saran district the following quotation from *Sarkar Saran* based on old correspondence regarding Saran district from 1785 to 1866 published by the Gazetteers' Revision Section in 1956 will be of interest :—

> "The jail at Chuprah had been the cause of many headaches to the local authorities as the Old Correspondence of different years show. The prisoners were allowed a good deal of latitude in the early nineteenth century regarding their food and movement within the jail. The messing system in the jail was introduced in Chuprah some time in 1845. Letter no. 1390 from the Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to the Sessions Judge of Sarun, dated Fort William, the 23rd July 1845, mentions that there was serious disturbance among the prisoners in the Chuprah Jail caused by an attempt to introduce the messing system. The Officiating Magistrate was instructed to enforce the messing system in the jail and it had been enforced elsewhere and that breaches should be met by punishment. The Magistrate was asked to consider if an additional force was required in the jail as the town

people might have sympathy with the prisoners. The turbulent prisoners were ordered to be sent to disperse among several other jails. The military authorities were informed to give prompt assistance to the Magistrates of Saran and Shahabad, if required.

The introduction of the messing system in Saran and Shahabad Jails had been preceded by a hunger-strike by the prisoners. Six hundred of the Saran and Shahabad prisoners had refused their food for two days in order to show their dissatisfaction against the messing system about to be introduced. A letter from the Sessions Judge of Saran, to the Magistrate of Saran, dated Chuprah, the 28th June 1845, in the Correspondence Volume for 1845, refers to the hunger-strike. It further refers to the difficulty of finding a cook as a cook selected by one set of Brahmins might be objected to by another set of the same caste. The Magistrate was asked by the Judge to group the prisoners according to the caste and to select amongst themselves a cook to the proportion of 1 to 20 prisoners.

Regarding jail population it may be mentioned that a letter from Patna Court of Circuit, to the Registrar, Nizamut Adalut, dated the 27th September 1826, mentions that there were 762 prisoners in Chuprah jail. Convicts under sentence of imprisonment for life used to be sent to Alipore jail and they were not to be employed on the roads till they had been removed to Alipore. This order was passed in a letter, dated the 24th August 1832, from Fort William as there had been cases of escape of convicts with life imprisonment while working on the road. Even women prisoners were to be in irons occasionally. There is a letter no. nil from Patna Court of Circuit, dated the 22nd February 1822, to the Magistrate of Saran, which mentions that three women in irons in Chuprah jail were to be relieved of the irons unless there was specific order directing that these prisoners should be so confined.

The old correspondence from 1795 to near about 1830 speak of the jails being administered with very great severity. As mentioned prisoners used to be branded and worked very hard. But from 1835 there appears to have been a change in the policy. A circular from Fort William, dated the 24th July 1835, gives information that the system of punishment was considered inadequate which rather rendered a criminal more hardened than to effect a reform in his morals. It was mentioned that, 'in order to eradicate the evil an improved system of prison discipline was sought for'.

Another circular from Fort William, dated the 28th December 1836, to the Commissioner of the Patna Division, copy to the Magistrate of Saran, mentions better and more humane steps for 'the victualling of prisoners'. A system of contract and ration with a regulated distribution of fixed rations to the prisoners were enjoined. For the first time it was mentioned that 'competition in the first instance, and a careful supervision of supplies, would certainly secure for the prisoners the best description of articles on the most moderate terms and is, therefore, more preferable to arrangements investing another particular individual with the monopoly'. It was further mentioned in the same circular that the system followed in the district of Rajshahi may be considered for general adoption where the system of money allowance is to be continued. The system was that under notice a *bazar* is railed off and appropriated to the use of the *Modees* or *Banias* and each gang of 10 or 12 convicts selected one of their men to make the purchases required. The persons thus selected were admitted under the charge of *Barkandazes* into the enclosed *bazar*. The prisoners had the liberty to prefer complaints, if necessary, in respect to the quality of the food or deficiency in weight or measure. In case of the appointment of a contractor the Magistrate was asked to exercise a careful control over the contractor.

Corporal punishments on the convicts also came to be discouraged. Frequent ulceration in the legs of the prisoners due to fetters was noticed and the Magistrate was asked to let the prisoners use hose as a preventive measure against scourage. The suggestion was made that the iron rings connecting the rings by chain should be removed."

LOCATION

The district of Saran has now got one district jail at Chapra and one subsidiary jail at each of the subdivisional headquarters, viz., Siwan and Gopalganj. The Chapra district jail is located in the heart of the town near the Sadar Hospital and is within the jurisdiction of Bhagwan Bazar police-station. The sub-jail at Siwan is located in the midst of that town near subdivisional courts, which has been declared by the State Government to be a protected area very recently, but no fencing or boundary has been constructed. The matter is reported to be under consideration. This jail is within the jurisdiction of Siwan Town Thana. The Gopalganj sub-jail is located in the heart of the Gopalganj town adjacent to the

criminal and Munsif's courts. There are only 30 Police Lock-ups in the district accommodated in each police-station building.

PRISON ORGANISATION.

Of the Chapra district jail, the Superintedent of Jail is the administrative head who is assisted by one jailor, two assistant jailors and two office assistants. The medical staff of the jail comprise one Medical Officer, i.e., Civil Surgeon, Saran, one Sub-Assistant Surgeon and one Compounder. There are five Head Wardens, forty-five Wardens and two Matrons. Recruitment of Warden staff is done by a Selection Board consisting of Superintendent, Central Jail, Buxar, and two other District Jail Superintendents. The appointment however is made by the Superintendent, Central Jail, Buxar, and arrangements for their training are made in batches, at Nathnagar Constable Training School, Bhagalpur.

Civil Assistant Surgeon, Siwan, is the part-time Superintendent of Siwan sub-jail and he is assisted by one Assistant Jailor who performs the duties of both executive and that of a clerk since the 25th June 1957. Prior to that one clerk used to look after the affairs of the jail as there was no post of an Assistant Jailor. The medical staff include the part-time Superintendent of Jail and a part-time Dresser who is appointed on a casual basis. The Warden staff consist of one Head Warden, six Wardens and one female Warden.

The Civil Assistant Surgeon, Gopalganj, is the Superintendent of the Gopalganj sub-jail. An Assistant Jailor is in charge of the executive and office work. The Superintendent is the Medical Officer of the sub-jail. There are one Head Warden and six Wardens. In addition, female Wardens are employed when some female prisoners are admitted. Under-trial prisoners are not required to do work unless they volunteer to do so. The two sub-jails keep only under-trial prisoners and on conviction, if any, they are transferred to the Chapra district jail for undergoing the term of their respective sentences. The under-trials who volunteer to work are engaged in jail kitchens.

Attempts are made to create a favourable climate for the moral improvement of the inmates. For that purpose Pandits and Maulvis visit the jail for giving religious instructions to the prisoners. Sometimes *kathas* and *milads* are arranged and performed by the prisoners themselves. There is a regular school for teaching the three Rs. to the illiterate minors and adults. Literate prisoners are encouraged to teach their fellow prisoners to remove their illiteracy. Moreover, daily newspapers, weekly magazines and periodicals are given to them.

Restrictions on smoking and tobacco consumption have been removed. The prisoners now can purchase *biri* and tobacco (*khaini*) from their private cash. Cinema shows are given by Publicity Department. Also dramatic performances are allowed to be performed by the prisoners themselves so that monotony of their life is removed to a certain degree.

Prisoners are employed on various types of work, such as agricultural, dairy, weaving, carpentry, smithy and oil-pressing etc. Vegetables are grown by the prisoners.

There is a weaving section where clothes of different patterns are woven by the prisoners. Clothings of the prisoners are made out of them. *Darees, ashnis, newars, jainewas,* both flowery and plain, and *kalins* are manufactured and sold to the public on cash payment. There is a carpentry section also where furniture of different types, such as, chairs, cots, etc., are manufactured and sold to the public. There is also a smithy section which prepare such implements which are mostly used in agriculture. Repair work is also carried out. Pottery utensils are also made in the Chapra district jail Tiles and bricks are also made in this jail which are used for repairs of departmental buildings.

Prisoners are taught crafts and employed on the work noted but no wages are paid to them. They are, however, given remission for good work. Payment is only made to night watchman and convict officers, at the rate of .50 nP. and Re. 1 per month, respectively. Remission up to one-third of their sentences is awarded to all well-behaved prisoners. Prisoners taking part in mass literacy as teachers are allowed remission up to one month over and above the remission already earned by him, if any.

Following is the statement of accommodation and daily average number of prisoners in the different jails :—

	The accommodational capacity.	Daily average no. of prisoners.	Year.
(*a*) Chapra district jail—			
Male	522	432.07	1954
Female	20	371.67	1955
		338.1	1956
Total ..	542		
(*b*) Siwan sub-jail—			
Male	60	62.38	1956
Female	4	72.59	1957
Total ..	64		
(*c*) Gopalganj sub-jail—			
Male	52	83.72	1956
Female	3	64.71	1957
Total ..	55		

Prisoners are classified as *A* and *B* by the courts concerned according to the antecedent of the prisoners and the nature of crimes committed by them. *A* denotes as casual prisoners and *B* as habitual prisoners. Prisoners of higher standard of living may be classified as Class I and Class II division prisoners by the courts concerned. In that case they get more facilities and better food than ordinary prisoners.

All prisoners are treated alike and there is no distinction of caste and creed.

Juvenile prisoners are strictly kept in the school for their education for which a literate prisoner and one of the staff remain in charge and attempts are made to see that they are well brought up as far as practicable during their short stay in jail and so no other work is taken from them.

Civil and Criminal Courts.

The earlier set up of the civil and criminal courts has been indicated in the chapter on General Administration. In 1906 the judgeship of Champaran was separated from the judgeship of Saran. Before that the District and Sessions Judge of Saran had his jurisdiction over Champaran area and the courts of Champaran were under the District Judge of Saran. In 1906 when Champaran judgeship was separated the civil court of Saran consisted of one District Judge, two Subordinate Judges, one Additional Subordinate Judge and four Munsifs at Sadar, one Munsif and one Additional Munsif at Siwan and one Munsif at Gopalganj. These courts were concerned with civil justice while the administration of criminal justice was in the hands of the District Magistrate and the Magistrates under him excepting sessions cases which were tried by the Sessions Judge. The appeals from the Magistrate used to be heard by the District and Sessions Judge combined in the same person.

In the last *Revised District Gazetteer of Saran,* published in 1930, it was mentioned : "The civil courts are those of the District Judge, four Subordinate Judges, and seven Munsifs at Sadar, two Munsifs at Siwan and one at Gopalganj. These officers are not all permanent, two Subordinate Judges and three Munsifs being additional. The volume of civil litigation is very heavy; the number of suits filed in 1928 was 22,834 and the average of the previous quinquennium was 24,095 and in all except one of these years the number was higher than in any other district of the province. No special reason seems to exist for these facts which must be attributed to the litigiousness of a large population. In 1925 a large temporary increase in title suits was attributed to the approaching expiry of the period of limitation for suits to set aside entries in the record-of-rights ".

The incidence of litigation has increased and at present the civil courts consist of one court of District Judge, two courts of

Additional District Judges, two permanent courts of Subordinate Judges, five courts of Additional Subordinate Judges and four courts of Munsifs at Sadar subdivision, two permanent and two additional courts of Munsifs at Siwan and one permanent and one additional courts of Munsif at Gopalganj in Saran district.

The District Judge is the administrative head of the judgeship. The Munsifs try suits of the valuation extending up to Rs. 4,000 under ordinary procedure and Rs. 250 under Small Cause Court Act and the Subordinate Judges try cases of the value beyond that. The courts of the Subordinate Judges also exercise the appellate jurisdiction in respect of the cases tried by the Munsifs. The courts of the District Judge and Additional District Judges have to try civil cases of special nature, e.g., Probate, Insolvency, Guardianship, Land Acquisition, Reference and Matrimonial cases. They have appellate jurisdiction in civil cases of ordinary procedure up to the value of Rs. 5,000 which has recently been increased to Rs. 10,000.

Formerly, the offices of Munsifs and Subordinate Judges were under the supervision and control of the presiding officers of the respective courts and some of them were put in charge of Nazarat, Record Room, Copying Department, etc. But after the system of Registrarship was introduced in 1946, at Sadar a Munsif is exclusively employed as Registrar of the Civil Courts. Now all the abovementioned offices in the judgeship are functioning under the supervision and control of the Registrar. This facilitates the judicial officers in performing their judicial work expeditiously. Since the middle of January. 1954, the Registrar has to check as an experimental measure the work of process servers with a view to eliminating corruption and mal-practices in the service of processes.

Prior to the year 1951, the District Magistrate and the Deputy Magistrates were dealing with the administration of criminal justice besides their executive work. The scheme of separation of the executive from the judiciary was introduced here in January, 1951. Now the administration of criminal justice has fully come under the control of Hon'ble the Patna High Court through the District and Sessions Judge. As there is shortage of Munsifs, some Magistrates have been taken in exclusively as Judicial Magistrates. So under the scheme, the Judicial Magistrates and Munsif-Magistrates are under the full control of the District and Sessions Judge. At present there are three courts of stipendiary Judicial Magistrates and two courts of Honorary Judicial Magistrates at Sadar, three courts of Munsif-Magistrates at Siwan and one court of Munsif-Magistrate and one court of stipendiary Judicial Magistrate at Gapalganj. This separation of the two functions of the same Magistrate was a long-felt want and on the whole the system is functioning successfully.

The District Judge is also the Sessions Judge of the Sessions Division. Besides this, there are two courts of Additional Sessions Judges and two courts of Assistant Sessions Judges in the judgeship.

The two Judges and the two Subordinate Judges in charge of permanent courts act as Assistant Sessions Judges. The administrative head of all these courts in the district is the District and Sessions Judge.

The volume of civil litigation had increased in 1955, but after that it has gradually come down. At present the volume of civil litigation is not so heavy. The table of civil suits instituted during the calendar years of 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956 and 1957 is given below :—

Total number instituted.

	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
Title suits ..	1,482	1,521	1,471	1,689	1.520
Money suits ..	1,053	1,093	1,172	1,121	1,136
Rent suits ..	10,730	13,752	17,444	8,715	6,910
S. C. C. suits ..	1,979	2,040	2,293	2,015	2,117
Misc. Judg. cases ..	2,068	2,325	2,270	8,305	2,217
Execution cases ..	6,021	6,171	7,223	5,811	6,957
Title appeals ..	468	408	487	523	436
Money appeals ..	76	71	61	94	95
Rent appeals ..	88	86	67	45	30

Number and value of money and Small Cause Court suits instituted.

	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
Miscellaneous appeals	134	129	179	175	169
Not exceeding Rs. 10	15	21	17	18	48
Exceeding Rs. 10 but not exceeding Rs. 50.	223	213	255	183	242
Exceeding Rs. 50 but not exceeding Rs. 100.	349	395	441	352	342
Exceeding Rs. 100 but not exceeding Rs. 500.	1,723	1,745	1,937	1,769	1,750
Exceeding Rs. 500 and above.	722	759	815	814	871

From this table it would appear that the number of title suits was the heaviest in 1956. The number of rent suits and S. C. C. suits were the heaviest in 1955. Similar was the case of miscellaneous judicial cases in 1956. The number of execution cases was the heaviest in 1955. The volume of civil litigation is comparatively

heavy due to the pressure of population upon land. The abolition of zamindari has minimised the civil litigation to a great extent. It would appear from the table of cases given above that the number of rent suits in 1955 was 17,444 but in the very next year, that is, 1956, the number fell down to 8,715 and it went down further in 1957.

Now civil suits are generally filed for removal of encroachments, for grant of right of easement or prescription, for partition of properties, for recovery of possession and for recovery of money. The volume of money suits and S. C. C. suits is very heavy which is apparent from the table of civil cases given above. Generally suits are filed for recovery of loan, based on handnotes or *Sarkhats*. Suits of other nature are very few. The incidence of rural indebtedness is reflected in the volume of such suits.

On the criminal side, there is preponderance of institution of cases of burglary, theft, dacoity, dacoity with murder, kidnapping, etc. Quite few cases of murder and of culpable homicide not amounting to murder also come for trial. It appears from the table of the institutions of criminal cases that came up to the courts given below that in 1952 the number of murder cases had increased but in 1953 the number went down. In 1957 the number of murder cases was not so high. The most common form of crime is burglary, theft, petty assault and dacoity. The number of theft cases is very high. In 1951 there were 818 theft cases. In 1957 the number of these cases was 637. The number of dacoity and robbery cases was 65 in 1951 but in 1957 it was only 38 :—

Table of Criminal Cases.

	1951.	1952.	1953	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
Murder under section 302	33	54	44	43	37	44	29
Culpable homicide not amounting to murder under section 304.	24	11	18	22	8	12	18
Kidnapping or forcible abduction under sections 366 to 369.	32	17	25	19	33	29	24
Rape under section 376	2	5	4	10	6	8	4
Theft under sections 379 to 381.	818	528	563	567	545	675	637
Robbery and dacoity under sections 392, 398, S. P. C.	65	69	71	58	75	46	38

(The figures include cases brought over from the previous years.)

PANCHAYAT ADALATS.

In order to foster and develop the spirit of self-government in village communities and to organise and improve their social and economic life, the State Legislature have passed the Bihar Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, under which 393 Gram Panchayat Courts known as *Gram Kutcheries* are functioning in this district. Besides them there are three Panchayat Courts established under the Village Administration Act. The Panchayat Courts try civil cases of the value not exceeding Rs. 100 and in special cases Rs. 200 in respect of movable properties only. They also try petty criminal cases. So far as the administration of justice is concerned, these courts are under the general supervision of the District Judge and the Munsif of competent jurisdiction in respect of civil cases and the Subdivisional Officer in respect of criminal cases. Details of the working of the Panchayat Courts will be found in the Chapter under Local Self-Government.

LEGAL PROFESSION AND BAR ASSOCIATION.

The legal profession consists of Advocates, Pleaders and Mokhtears. There are at present 186 Advocates and Pleaders and 40 Mokhtears at the Bar. There is no fresh recruitment of Mokhtears who are normally entitled to appear before the Magistrates only. There is no Barrister in this judgeship now. The same person performs both as Public Prosecutor and Government Pleader and under him there are a number of Assistant Public Prosecutors and Assistant Government Pleaders. The State Government have also appointed a separate class of Police Officers who are known as District Prosecutors and Assistant District Prosecutors. They conduct criminal cases on behalf of the State in magisterial courts. The Bar Associations at the headquarters and at the subdivisional headquarters have their own buildings and library. The Bar Associations look after the interest of the members of the Bar and encourage a dignified and helpful relationship with the Bench. The Bar Association of Chapra is known to be very alert of their rights, obligations and dignity.

CHAPTER XII.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

Roads and Buildings.

The Chapra Division of the Public Works Department coincides with the revenue area of the district. An Executive Engineer with headquarters at Chapra is in charge of the Division. He is under the administrative control of the Superintending Engineer, North Bihar, who has his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The Chief Engineer, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna, is the administrative head of the department.

For proper management and execution of works, the Chapra Division is subdivided into three subdivisions--namely, Sadar, Siwan and Gopalganj, each under the administrative control of a Subdivisional Officer, Public Works Department. There are two Subdivisional Officers at Chapra. The Subdivisional Officers are responsible to the Executive Engineer of the Division for the management and execution of works within their subdivisions

There are ten sections in the Division each under the charge of an Overseer or Sectional Officer. These Sectional Officers are under their respective Subdivisional Officers. These sections are at Chapra, Maharajganj, Siwan, Mairwa, Mirganj, Sonepur. Masrakh, Marhowrah, Garkha and Guthni.

Although the Executive Engineer is responsible to the Superintending Engineer, North Bihar, Muzaffarpur, he has to work in close contact with the District Magistrate. He has to see that proper measures are taken to maintain the public buildings and roads in his Division and to prevent encroachment on Government lands in his charge. He is responsible to see that the surveying and mathematical instruments in his Division are properly cared for and to report on their condition to the Superintending Engineer at the end of each working season. He inspects the work and managements of the Subdivisional Officers and Sectional Officers. He invites tenders for the execution of the development projects of roads and buildings. The Subdivisional Officers and Overseers are responsible for the management and execution of works within their respective jurisdictions.

Before the commencement of the First Five-Year Plan, there was hardly any well-surfaced P. W. D. road in the district of Saran. A few roads were taken over under the Post-War Development Scheme and improvement work started in 1949 which gained momentum when the First Five-Year Plan was started in 1951. At the end of the First Five-Year Plan, 206 miles of roads were under the Public Works Department out of which 180 miles were surfaced during

the Plan period. The Second Five-Year Plan provides for taking over 146 miles of new roads (including metalling 16 miles of existing P. W. D. road which was hitherto maintained as *kutcha* road) and completing the roads taken over under the First Five-Year Plan. There would, thus, be 336 miles of Public Works Department roads at the end of the Second Five-Year Plan out of which a length of 250 miles has been metalled till 1957.

As to bridges under the P. W. D., the pontoon bridge over the river Gandak between Sonepur and Hajipur in Muzaffarpur district was completed in 1956 at a total cost of about ten lakhs of rupees. It is 2,000 feet long and operates in the fair weather seasons. The other important bridge is the Andar Bridge (screw pile bridge) on the Siwan-Andar road measuring 260 feet long and was constructed at a cost of Rs. 1,40,000.

IRRIGATION DEPARTMENT.

The Saran Irrigation Division was created in 1949 with its headquarters at Chapra. The area of the Division corresponds with the area of the district. The Saran Irrigation Division is placed under the administrative control of an Executive Engineer with headquarters at Chapra. The Division is under the administrative control of the Superintending Engineer, Gandak Circle, who has his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The Chief Engineer, North Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna, is the head of the department.

The Saran Irrigation Division is divided into three subdivisions, namely, the Chapra Waterways Subdivision, the Siwan Irrigation Subdivision and the Gopalganj Irrigation Subdivision, each under the charge of a Subdivisional Officer. The subdivisions have sections and each section is under an Overseer or a Sectional Officer. There are altogether eleven Overseers in the Division out of which five are in the Chapra Waterways Subdivision, one in each of the three sections, namely, Chapra, Tajpur and Dighwarah and other two are kept reserved at the divisional headquarters, Chapra. The Gopalganj Irrigation Subdivision has three sections, namely. Gopalganj, Basantpur and Saraya while Siwan has also three, namely, Siwan, Mirganj and Darauli. These Overseers are under the administrative control of their respective Subdivisional Officers.

The Executive Engineer is responsible for the administration and general control of the Division. The Subdivisional Officers and Overseers are responsible to the Executive Engineer for irrigation in their respective jurisdictions. The Overseers are under the immediate control of the Subdivisional Officers.

In 1951-52 the old Saran canal was renovated at an estimated cost of Rs. 2,99,700 and consequently the canal attained the capacity to irrigate 12,000 acres of land. There is a proposal to get the old bed of the *Bansinala* desilted and thereby increase the capacity of the canals to irrigate up to about 25,000 acres of land.

The Saran Irrigation Division has constructed 97 tube-wells at the total cost of Rs. 18,97,038 till 1956. These tube-wells have the capacity to irrigate 38,800 acres of land.

There are two major embankments, namely, the Gandak and the Gogra embankments, details of which have been given separately. There are eight other embankments which were constructed in 1955-56 under the Major Irrigation Scheme. (For details please see the chapter on Agriculture and Irrigation.)

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING.

For the purpose of administration of Public Health Engineering, Saran is a subdivision and is under the direct control of an Assistant Engineer with his headquarters at Chapra. This subdivision is under the administrative jurisdiction of the Executive Engineer, Muzaffarpur Division. The Superintending Engineer, Muzaffarpur Circle, who has his headquarters at Muzaffarpur controls four divisions, namely, Muzaffarpur, Bhagalpur, Darbhanga and Purnea, while the Chief Engineer of the Public Health Engineering Department with his headquarters at Patna is the administrative head of the department.

The Saran subdivision is subdivided into three Civil Sections, namely, Chapra, Siwan and Gopalganj, each under the charge of an Overseer or a Sectional Officer. The Overseers are responsible to the Assistant Engineer for the management and execution of works within their sections.

The Public Health Engineering Department deals with the problems of public health from engineering point of view, viz., water-supply, drainage and sewerage. The main functions of the department are the execution of Government and municipal public health schemes executed by local bodies through their own agencies. So far as the Saran subdivision is concerned it has not shown much progress. The drains and the sewerage of the towns which are in a bad condition are not maintained by this department. Its activities are restricted to the sewerage and drainage in the public buildings. For drinking purposes it has constructed 528 tube-wells and hand pumps till 1957-58 in the rural areas at the cost of Rs. 15 lakhs. For the supply of water in Chapra it maintains two water towers, each having a capacity of one lakh gallons. It also maintains a water tower at Sonepur to supply drinking water during Sonepur fair.

ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT.

The Electrical Executive Engineer, Electric Supply Division, Chapra, is in charge of the division and is under the control of the Superintending Engineer, Muzaffarpur Circle, with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur. The Chief Engineer, Electricity, Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna, is the head of the department.

The Executive Engineer is assisted by three Assistant Electrical Engineers with their headquarters at Chapra, Mirganj and Siwan.

They are in charge of the transmission and distribution in their respective jurisdiction. There are two power houses, one at Chapra and the other at Mirganj, each under the charge of a Superintendent of the power house.

The following towns and villages have been electrified till the end of 1958 : Chapra, Siwan, Gopalganj, Mirganj, Hathua, Maharajganj, Ziradai, Mairwa, Daronda, Sundari, Muraru, Barauli, Goriakothi, Pachrukhi, Machagu, Angaila, Bangra, Dhanwah, Jagouli. Considering that the Electricity Division was started very recently the progress has been very good.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

The District Agriculture Officer, Saran, with his headquarters at Chapra, is in charge of the department. He is under the administrative control of the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Tirhut Division, whose headquarters are at Muzaffarpur. The Director of Agriculture is the administrative head of the Agricultural Department at the State level.

There are three Subdivisional Agricultural Officers, one in each of the three subdivisions of the district. They are under the administrative control of the District Agricultural Officer. Below the Subdivisional Agricultural Officers are the Agricultural Inspectors whose strength in the district was 27 in 1957-58, one in each thana of the district. Each Agricultural Inspector is assisted by one *Kamdar* or a fieldman.

The areas under National Extension Service and Community Development Blocks are known as intensive area. For agricultural purpose the intensive area is administered by the Agricultural Extension Supervisor whose number in the district was 19 in 1957-58. There is one village level worker for every ten villages in the intensive area who has to assist the Agricultural Extension Supervisor. The non-intensive areas are administered by the Agricultural Inspectors and the *kamdars*. But so far as Subdivisional Agricultural Officer is concerned he is responsible.

For working out the sugarcane improvement schemes the district is divided into two circles, i.e., Hathua and Siwan circles each under the charge of an Assistant Director of Agriculture. The activities of the Assistant Director of Agriculture are confined to the reserved areas of the sugar factories. Each Assistant Director of Agriculture is assisted by five Agricultural Inspectors and each Agricultural Inspector has six *kamdars*. From July, 1958, the sugarcane improvement scheme has vested in general agriculture and has come under the administrative control of the District Agricultural Officer and since then the Assistant Director of Agriculture is simply a technical personnel.

As mentioned under the chapter Agriculture and Irrigation there has not been much headway in agricultural education and

research. There are several specialists who are to advise the District Agricultural Officer in technical matters. They are for (*i*) Agronomy, (*ii*) Botany, (*iii*) Chemistry, (*iv*) Mechanics, (*v*) Engineering, (*vi*) Marketing, (*vii*) Plant Protection, (*viii*) Horticulture, (*ix*) Well-boring, and (*x*) Fishery. The specialists are required to make extensive tour to tackle the problems at the field.

Demonstrations are frequently held in the Block areas. The owner-cultivator adopts the agricultural improvements advocated by the department under the supervision of the District Agricultural Officer. Field demonstration of standing crops are held during every season. In Sonepur there is an exhibition ground where improved method of cultivation is shown by actual demonstration during the *mela* period.

The Central Farm at Sepaya has an area of 324 acres where experiments and trials are frequently done. There is a proposal under the Second Five-Year Plan to start a farm of 25 acres in every *anchal* of the district for the multiplication of seed and till 1958, 18 such farms have been acquired.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY DEPARTMENT.

The District Animal Husbandry Officer, Saran, with his headquarters at Chapra, is in charge of the Animal Husbandry Department in the district. He is under the administrative control of the Deputy Director of Animal Husbandry, North Bihar Range, with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur, and the Director of Animal Husbandry, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna

The District Animal Husbandry Officer is assisted by the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Supervisor whose strength in the district was 19 in 1957-58. There were 19 Blocks in the district in 1957-58 and each Block for the purpose of animal husbandry is under the charge of the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Supervisor. Apart from them a Livestock Inspector and a Fodder Officer are working under the guidance of the District Animal Husbandry Officer at the district headquarters, Chapra. The objects of the department are—

(*i*) to improve the local livestock by grading up with suitable breeds;

(*ii*) to improve cattle nutrition by promoting cultivation of fodder crops, grasses and preparation of hay and silos;

(*iii*) improvement of existing *goshalas* by bringing them to the level of dairy farm and the organisation of milk production and distribution; and

(*iv*) to increase the number of veterinary hospitals and dispensaries.

Cattle breeding.—In course of two years, i.e., from 1956—1958, the department has distributed 112 *hariana* bulls and 28 *murrah*

buffaloes for upgrading the breeds through natural services. For artificial insemination services there were six artificial insemination centres in 1957-58 located at Chapra, Ekma, Mairwa, Siwan, Gopalganj and Hathua with 19 sub-centres located at Sonepur, Garkha, Khaira, Manjhi, Andar, Raghunathpur, Darauli. Mirganj, Kuchaikot, Pachrukhi, Maharajganj, Masrakh, Barauli, Goraikothi, Marhowrah, Chainwa, Guthni, Jalalpur and Sasamusa. *Jamunapuri* bucks have been kept for the improvement of goats. A key village centre sponsored by the Government of India is working at Hathua for the production of permium bulls to meet the requirements of the countryside. The working of a key village centre has been explained in the chapter under Agriculture and Irrigation.

Fodder.—For fodder the grass of perennial nature like napier, para, guinea and *berseem* have been introduced in the fodder demonstration plots. In 1957-58 there were 91 acres of land under such fodder crops. One hundred and fifty-five *pucca* silo pits were constructed in the district to enable the livestock owner to procure grain and succulent fodder in the summer.

Goshalas.—Out of the 14 *goshalas*, the *goshalas* of Chapra and Siwan were taken by the Government to bring them to the level of dairy farm. The total production of milk in 1956 was as follows: Cow-milk—16,51,104 maunds, buffalo-milk—14,86,430 maunds and goat-milk—11,403 maunds. The quantity of milk per cow or buffalo is small. The figures of livestock population are given in the chapter on Agriculture and Irrigation.

Veterinary hospitals and dispensaries.—There are 22 veterinary institutions in the district, out of which ten are managed by the Government and the rest are managed by the District Board. Details have been given in the chapter under Agriculture and Irrigation.

INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT.

The District Industries Officer, Saran, with headquarters at Chapra, works under the administrative control of the Deputy Director of Industries and the Director of Industries, Bihar, with headquarters at Patna.

The District Industries Officer has three Inspectors of Industries, one in each of the three subdivisions of the district. Each Inspector of Industries is assisted by one Industrial Extension Supervisor. There is a provision under the Second Five-Year Plan to have an Industrial Extension Supervisor in each of the Block of the district.

As mentioned before Saran is not industrialised in the proper sense of the term. About 90 per cent of the population depends on agriculture. There are only 7 sugar mills. So far as small-scale industries are concerned there were 52 rice, oil and *dal* mills in 1957-58. The small-scale and cottage industries have been discussed at length under the chapter on Industries. So far as technical schools are concerned,

the Mahila Silpa Vidyalaya, Chapra, deserves mention. In this school training in weaving, tailoring, knitting and embroidery is given. At Marhowrah there is a technical school.

Co-operative Department.

There are two circles, namely, Chapra and Siwan, for the purpose of Co-operative Department each under an Assistant Registrar of the Co-operative Societies. The Chapra Circle corresponds with the revenue areas of the Sadar subdivision while Siwan Circle stands both for the revenue areas of Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions. The Deputy Registrar of the Co-operative Societies of the Tirhut Division with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur controls the work of the Assistant Registrars of Chapra and Siwan Circles. The Registrar, Co-operative Societies, Bihar, with his headquarters at Patna, is the administrative head of the Co-operative Department.

The Assistant Registrar has a staff of three Inspectors, one for each subdivision, 19 Supervisors and 56* Auditors. The Inspectors of the Co-operative Societies have to manage loans for the societies within their jurisdictions. In case of malpractices they have also to make inquiry and suggest remedy to remove them. Collection of loans and day-to-day administration of the Co-operative Banks and the Co-operative Societies are carried on by the Inspectors. In their work they are assisted by the Supervisors. The Bihar and Orissa Co-operative Societies Act provides for statutory audit of every society once in a year either by the Registrar or by persons authorised by him. The audit staff are engaged in auditing the account of the Co-operative Bank and the account of the different Co-operative Societies. Apart from them, there are one General Manager with his headquarters at Siwan; two Managers for *Vyapar Mandal,* one at Ekma and the other at Baniyapur and ten Managers for Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies. These Managers have to make arrangement for purchase and sale of the commodities of the societies of the district.

The District Co-operative Federation works for the expansion of the Co-operative Societies in the district. All the Co-operative Societies are affiliated to the District Co-operative Federation. It imparts training to members of the societies and thereby works for the expansion of the Co-operative Societies.

There are three Central Co-operative Banks, one at each three subdivisional headquarters of the district. They are functioning as the agents of the State Co-operative Bank, Ltd., Patna. The Banks are managed by a Management Committee selected by the members of the Co-operative Societies affiliated to the Banks. The main functions of the Banks are to raise funds for loans and to make arrangement for the sale of fertilizers and the finished goods. The

* These figures are of 30th June 1958. (P. C. R. C.)

loans are advanced for the purchase of bullocks, improved agricultural implements, raw materials and fertilizers. The number of Co-operative Societies and others maintained by the control of Co-operative Bank on the 30th June 1957 was as follows :-

	Chapra Central Co-operative Bank.	Siwan Central Co-operative Bank.	Gopalganj Central Co-operative Bank.
(1) Multi-purpose Co-operative Societies.	230	228	321
(2) Large-size Co-operative Societies.	3	2	..
(3) Credit societies ..	62	62	50
(4) Vyapar Mandal ..	1	2	2
(5) Godowns (Fertilizers).	5	3	2
(6) Centres for sale of fertilizers.	18	6	9

The progress achieved by the Co-operative Societies will be apparent from the statistics for 30th June 1957 given below :—

Name.	No.	No. of members.	Share capital.	Reserve fund.	Own capital.	Deposit.	Working capital.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Central Co-operative Banks.	3	1,193	2,52,943	1,82,789	4,35,032	9,33,605	21,67,559
2 Multipurpose Co-operative, Agriculture.	1,092	39,427	4,06,806	3,08,840	7,85,653	66,195	22,41,024
3. Co-operative Farming.	1	15	28,905	..	28,975	..	79,693
4. Credit Societies for Government servants.	1	586	16,040	10,260	26,307	27,285	53,682
5. Consumers' Co-operative Societies.	27	1,045	28,074	427	28,501	1,007	48,874
6. Weavers' Co-operative Societies.	72	6,774	79,410	52	80,262	1,60,803	2,00,658

Name.	No.	No. of members.	Share capital.	Reserve fund.	Own capital.	Deposit.	Working capital.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
7. Industrial Co-operative Societies.	24	383	5,865	182	6,047	3,701	27,188
8. Cane Marketing Unions.	25	2,191	82,277	8,53,684	9,35,961	8,08,578	20,79,111
9. Multipurpose Co-operative Union.	1	147	8,050	3,006	11,056	..	11,056
10. Canegrowers' Co-operative Societies.	2,161	1,05,866	3,01,948	2,63,185	5,65,141	66,659	13,01,192
11. Fishermen's Co-operative Society.	1	253	1,708	239	2,037	..	2,037
12. Social Service Co-operative Societies.	4	566	3,905	3,614	7,519	280	7,799
13. Harijan Co-operative Societies.	2	54	..	12	12	9	21
14. Marketing Co-operative Society.	5	155	25,816	4,811	30,623	4,326	34,949

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

The District Education Officer with his headquarters at Chapra is the administrative head of the district, for purposes of primary and secondary education. The District Education Officer belongs to Class I of the Bihar Educational Service. The post of the District Education Officer was created in 1958. Before the creation of the post the District Inspector of Schools was the administrative head of the district and had to work under the Divisional Inspector of Schools of the Tirhut Division with his headquarters at Muzaffarpur The post of the District Inspector of Schools as such has been abolished with the creation of the post of the District Education Officer. The District Education Officer works under the administrative control of the Divisional Inspector of Schools who also belongs to Class I cadre of the Bihar Education Service. The Divisional Inspector of Schools is in over-all charge for the Division. The administrative head of the Department is the Director of Public Instruction with his headquarters at Patna.

For each of the three subdivisions there is a Subdivisional Education Officer who looks after all types of schools within his subdivision. There are three Deputy Inspectors of Schools in each of the three subdivisions of the district who have to work under the administrative control of their respective Subdivisional Education Officer. The Deputy Inspector of Schools has power to visit up to the schools of the middle standard. Apart from them there are 41 Sub-Inspectors of Schools in each of the circles of the district who look after the schools of the Upper Primary Standard within their respective circle.

For the administration of the girls' institutions there is a Deputy Inspectress of Schools with her headquarters at Gopalganj who inspects the schools up to the middle standard. The District Inspectress of Schools with her headquarters at Muzaffarpur has jurisdiction on the girls' schools of Saran district as well.

In 1949-50 when there was an expansion in the field of basic education, one Superintendent of Basic and Social Education was attached with the office of the Divisional Inspector of Schools at Muzaffarpur. In April, 1951, by an extraordinary gazette notification the Government sanctioned the post of the District Superintendent of Education in each district of the State. The District Superintendent of Education controls the educational purse of the District Board and is responsible for the payment of teachers up to the middle schools. There are five Deputy Superintendents of Education, two for the general education, two for the Basic education and one for the physical education. There is an inspecting *Maulvi* who controls the Urdu *maktabs* of the district.

Primary Education.—It is the declared policy of the Government to make primary education free and compulsory between the age-group 6—10. This scheme is expected to be implemented from 1961. In the municipal area of Chapra the compulsory primary education scheme has been enforced from 1939 for the boys between the age-group 5—10. The number of primary institutions in 1956-57 was 1,889 out of which 1,658 were for boys and 231 for girls, while the strength of scholars was 1,24,922 with 1,10,720 boy scholars and 14.202 girl scholars. The primary institutions are managed by the District Board, Municipalities and the Notified Area Committee.

Middle Schools.—The middle schools are managed by the District Board, Municipality and the Managing Committees. The number of middle schools in 1956-57 was 166 (160 for boys and 6 for girls) with 25,606 scholars consisting of 24,779 boy scholars and 829 girl scholars

Secondary Education.—The secondary education is now under the general control of the Secondary School Examination Board, Bihar. An examination is conducted by it annually and the students who pass the examination are awarded the Secondary School Certificate. The head office of the Board is in Patna. The Secondary

Schools are mainly managed by the private agencies (Managing Committees) aided by the Government. The Zila School, Chapra and the Chapra High School for girls are managed by the Government. The total number of high schools in 1956-57 was 78 (77 for boys and 1 for girls) with 28,453 scholars (27,913 boys and 540 girls).

Basic Education.—The Basic Education Scheme was introduced in the district in 1949 and is managed by the Government. It has received rapid progress and is becoming popular. There are three types of Basic schools—Post-Basic, Senior Basic and Junior Basic and their number in 1956-57 was 1, 42 and 155 respectively. The strength of scholars in 1956-57 in all types of Basic schools was 16,216 (14,997 boys and 1,219 girls).

Higher Education.—There are six colleges in the district which impart teaching up to Bachelor Standard in the faculties of Arts, Science and Commerce. These colleges are affiliated to the Bihar University. All the colleges are managed by the private agencies but receive grant from the University. The Bihar University which has its office in Patna controls the higher education and conducts university examinations.

CHAPTER XIII.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

HISTORY OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Ideas of Local Self-Government had prevailed in the Pre-British days in different parts of Bihar and Saran was no exception to it. The villages and particularly the large villages were, in a way, States in miniature where the local problems and needs for sanitation, communication, the judiciary and the police were served by assemblies of the people themselves with a *Mukhiya* or an executive head. Village administration was more or less entrusted to the village headman, commonly known as *Gopa* in the Hindu period and *Muquoddam* in the Muslim period. Whenever there was a strong chief near about he would try and extend his administration on the other smaller village headman. If the strong chieftain was removed, the units used to separate and again form themselves into separate semi-autonomous bodies. This was the general picture and there used to be variations.

Not much attention had been paid to the condition of the roads, ferries or sanitation. There was hardly any broad policy knitting up the different areas. There was practically not much arrangement for maintaining the trans-district roads although there is no doubt that there were trans-district roads. There had been invasions in a way that have passed through the North Bihar roads. As a matter of fact many of the smaller but strong free booters used to prefer to carry out their ravages in North Bihar and avoid the stronger chiefs in South Bihar.

The British administration inherited a bad legacy so far as the roads, ferries, sanitation and conservancy and other rural problems are concerned in this district. The zamindars were so many small chiefs, often allied to each other and often separating and carrying out their petty quarrels. The old correspondence volumes indicate that many of them were almost like free booters and used to maintain *lathials* and wrestlers for safety and self-interest.* It can well be imagined that it was not to the interest of such zamindars who were entrusted with the roads and other affairs which are now grouped under Local Self-Government to have a proper maintenance. The zamindars immediately prior to the advent of the British administration did not satisfactorily discharge their responsibilities in the matter. Local affairs of this type attracted the attention of the earlier British administrators and they found that they must give a top priority to such matters.

Evidence of this is found in a letter. dated the 1st May 1800. from the Revenue and Judicial Department, to William Cowper,

* "Saran Old Records" published by the Gazetteer Revision Section.

President and Member, Board of Revenue, which was accompanied by a letter that the Governor-General in Council wanted better communications between principal cities and towns throughout the different districts and instructed the Magistrates to report on certain matters. A copy of this letter is preserved in Volume 18, from 1st January 1800 to 23rd July 1800, in Muzaffarpur Record Room. Among other matters, the Magistrate of Saran was required to give an account of the roads, how and in what manner they were repaired, what roads were particularly necessary and how they could best be made and what Regulations were necessary to avoid encroachment and keep them in repair, whether zamindars could do it without taking it to be a hardship, whether the construction of a bridge was necessary and at what expense. The Magistrate was further called upon to report on the conditions of ferries, who maintained the boats, how expenses were being met and what arrangements were necessary for the future regulations of ferries. The proper maintenance of streets in cities and towns and supply of water, drainage were other items that the Magistrate had to look into. The Magistrate was also asked to look into the question of river communication and to report if water communication could be improved by cleaning or deepening the river beds and if that could be done by convicts and at what expense. The Magistrate was asked to indicate any other measure to improve agriculture, commerce, police, health and general condition of the country. The Magistrates were instructed to give a list of priority as to what they wanted to execute first and what at a later stage as well as to suggest the mode of financing the scheme whether by tolls or any other means not liable to any material objection.

It has to be mentioned here that there was a very liberal use of convict labour in the early days of British rule in Saran for the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges and embankments. Able-bodied convicts used to be detailed out in batches under close guard for such purposes. Regarding the *bundhs* and embankments, old correspondence in the District Record Room of Chapra refers to the work of Captain Sage who was employed for constructing a number of *bundhs* and embankments to keep the district free from inundation.

All this will show that there was a great attempt on the part of the early British administrators in Saran district to give a top priority to the construction of works of public utility as roads, *bundhs*, embankments, ferries and rest houses. They were a great necessity for administrative purposes. Bad communications encouraged highway crimes. There was a good river traffic but the condition of the roads was such that heavy traffic in goods up to the river points was not always easy. As mentioned before it had almost become nobody's business to construct roads or even to maintain the roads that existed. For purposes of trade and commerce and particularly to move indigo, saltpetre and sugar from the *kothis* it was necessary

to have a fairly maintained net work of roads. The riverain district of Saran has always been liable to inundation and it was necessary to have proper embankments and *bundhs.* There is a good deal of old correspondence in the volumes for 1803 in the Record Room of Chuprah tracing the history of the construction of the *ghats, bundhs* and embankments. The main policy followed for securing protection from the floods appears to have been to construct high embankments and strengthen them, whenever necessary.

Another important work which required a good set of roads was military movement and the supply and the arrangement for conveyances and *rasad* (food supply) for the troops at a very short notice. There is a letter no. 1319, dated the 22nd October 1857, in which the Commissioner of the Patna Division asked the Collector of Saran to peremptorily arrange for 50 carts, 10 elephants, 10 *dulis* and 10 *ekkas* for transporting the goods and luggages of the Naval Brigade some of whom were sick and were suffering from foot-sore. The Magistrate was also asked to keep several hundreds of sheep, bullocks, huge quantity of vegetables, etc., for the use of the Brigade. This quick raising of supply of labour, conveyance and *rasad* frequently caused embarrassment to the local Magistrate and heightened the necessity of .having better communication. The practical effect of the precautions taken was seen when insurrections broke out in 1857. At that time quick military movement had to be arranged for. When the large Nepal Brigade passed through this district to quell the insurrections, the strain on the local administrators would have been hundredfold more if the roads had not been somewhat improved earlier.

Regulations were passed in 1816 and 1819 authorising the Government to levy money for the maintenance of ferries and the repair and construction of roads, bridges and drains. In administering the fund so raised the Government were advised by the local committees with the Magistrate as Secretary which they appointed in each district. This was in a way the nucleus of the formation of the District Board.

In 1794, there were only three main roads in the district which were the road from Chapra to Champaran *via* Mashrak and Sabighat, from Chapra to Muzaffarpur *via* Rewaghat and from Chirand to Manjhi *via* Godna. All these roads were in a deplorable condition and hardly passable in the rains. So far as the bridges, till at least 1815, there was only one bridge apparently worth any notice mentioned in the Collector's report and that was the one on Barauli on the Daha river. There are frequent references in the old correspondence to the munificence of Sri Banwari Lal of Chapra who made an extensive gift of his lands and buildings of *sarai* at Chaprah town to the Government. The *sarais* or rest houses were an aid to the travellers. The Collector of Saran was asked to hold a *darbar* and give *sanad* and *khillut* to Banwari Lal for his liberal donations. The buildings of *sarai* donated by Banwari Lal Shah today house

the Rajendra College, a first grade college in Chapra. The present Sadar Hospital buildings are also situated on the lands of Banwari Lal and the hospital was further aided by munificent donation from him. A portion of the land gifted by the side of the hospital has been utilised for building the jail. Banwari Lal's two wives also gave donations and were given titles, a unique privilege for a woman in those days. Foreign Political Consultations, October, 1869, nos. 179—183 (National Archives, New Delhi) show that the titles on these two ladies recommended by the Collector were "Syed-o-zanan-o-Sutiodia Khandan" as a prefix to their names. But the Governor-General accepted Bengal Government's recommendation of the title of "Jawadoon nissa-Sattoodia Khandan" (the most liberal of the females and the most praised of her family).

By 1830 a net work of roads had come into existence, namely, the roads from Chirand to Darauli, Salimpurghat, Rewaghat, Sonepur and Gorakhpur. In 1839 the roads to the north and west of Chaprah town were thoroughly repaired and the ditches were filled up. The inter-district road to Gorakhpur was not maintained properly as has been mentioned in the *Bengal Gazetteer* of 1840. As has been mentioned before convict labour was largely used for the construction and maintenance of the roads. Regarding the *bundhs* and embankments the correspondence in 1830 refer to the work of Captain Sage who was employed for constructing a number of *bundhs* and embankments to keep the district free from inundation. A letter, dated the 15th March 1829, from the Collector, to the Officiating Commissioner of Revenue, mentions the *bundh* work given to Captain Sage who had employed a large number of men and wanted to complete the *bundh* before the rainy season would set in. Regarding the apathy of the zamindars to assist Captain Sage, it was mentioned in the letter "if they would neglect this order, then in such cases, they would be held responsible for such injury as might occur to their estates from an inundation of the river and from the payment of Government *zumma* assessed on them".

A letter, dated the 15th May 1826, from the Council Chamber, to the Magistrate of Saran, gives the resolutions on the construction of bridges on the road between Chapra and Rewaghat as well as on the Soondee and Zeetnullah on the road from Chapra to Revelganj. The cost of construction of the iron bridges over the Zeetnullah and Soondee originally estimated at Rs. 18,368 and the cost was to be defrayed from the surplus of Chaukidaris and ferries. But subsequently the Military Board submitted a revised estimate and observed that the wooden bridges would serve the purpose well. The Military Board, according to this letter was to be instructed to direct the Executive Engineer of the Dinapore Division to commence the work. In the early part of the nineteenth century it appears that the Military Department worked in close co-operation with the civil administration for the construction of roads and bridges.

In a district which has a number of rivers there is great importance of the *ghats*. Many of the *ghats* were under the zamindars or other individual owners. Some *ghats* were taken over by the Government and used to be leased out. The early British administrator also made efforts to repair the existing embankments and the construction of the new ones to protect the district from inundation. The Gandak embankment is one of the oldest in the State. It appears from the Collectorate papers that one Dhauso Ram, the *Naib* of Muhammad Kasim, Subahdar of Bihar, spent over a lakh of rupees in making the embankment in or about 1756. As stated before the embankment had fallen into disorder between 1820 and 1825 and the Government in 1830 repaired the Gandak embankment. The inhabitants of certain villages had to be removed to the south of the *bundhs* for the security of the new embankment of the Gandak.

It will be seen that during this period some of the local works which now come under Local Self-Government offices used to be done by the zamindars or other individual owners, some by the Military Department and some through the efforts of the District Magistrates with convict labour.

In 1870 a great fillip was given to the development of Local Self-Government and by 1871 a system had been introduced in the province whereby cess calculated on a certain percentage of the rent was imposed and utilised for the construction and maintenance of roads. When first cess was imposed there was a great opposition that it was a violation of the Permanent Settlement. The Government partly yielded and decided to restrict the cess only to the amount required for the roads. Thus the roads cess, as it was called in Bengal, could not be diverted to purposes of primary education as was done in other provinces. The committees that were formed to look after the affairs were controlled by the officials but it cannot be said that non-official voice did not have any scope.

In 1882, Lord Ripon, the Viceroy and Governor-General, made an earnest endeavour to remove the defects and to introduce a real element of Local Self-Government on the lines of English convention. He advocated that the subdivision and not the district should be the maximum area served by one committee or local board. An attempt was made in Bengal which included the present State of Bihar to carry Lord Ripon's principles to the fullest extent. But the Bill introduced for the purpose was vetoed by the Secretary of State. However, the urge that the people had started feeling and the push given by Lord Ripon had its result when the Local Self-Government Act was passed in 1885. The District Board was established in 1886. The municipalities of Chapra, Siwan and Revelganj were established in 1864, 1869 and 1876, respectively.

The District Board originally consisted of 26 members. The District Magistrate was the *ex-officio* member and the Chairman on his own rights and this arrangement continued up to 1923—1934.

There is no doubt that the original idea was that the District Boards should be the venue where the people will learn their first lessons of Local Self-Government. The rigidity of official control was irksome but at the same time it must be admitted that the paternal care of the District Magistrate had its good points as well. There was a very big weightage in the administration at that time in favour of the District Magistrate. As a matter of fact a District Magistrate of personality would carry the district administration in his pockets as it were and with that set up a non-official Chairman would not have been able to produce much effect on the District Magistrate. The District Magistrate had a very large say in the purse of the Government and an adverse opinion from him of the non-official Chairman in the earlier days of the District Board could have ruined the Board. That is why, in a way it may be said that the official Chairman was not an unmitigated evil. The defects were recognised in the Montogu-Chelmsford Report (1919). It was proposed to make these bodies as representative as possible and to remove unnecessary restrictions regarding taxation, the budget and the sanctions of works, to bring the franchise as low as possible and to replace the nominated Chairman by an elected non-official member. This report also emphasised the importance of developing the corporate life of the village.

Another landmark was a change of the control of Local Self-Government affairs at Government level. In 1921 Local Self-Government became a transferred subject in charge of a Minister. The Municipalities and Local Boards were given enhanced powers and functions, were comparatively freed from official control and the District Boards were broad-based on a much larger electorate. The District Board was given the right of electing a Chairman. The Provincial Government evinced a good deal of interest for the progress of the Local Self-Government institution.

In 1924-25 the District Boards were reconstituted on an elective basis under the provisions of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act. This was a definite mark of progress. The reconstituted District Board of Saran consisted of 40 members of whom 5 were *ex-officios*, 5 nominated by Government and 30 elected. The Board came to be presided over by a non-official Chairman for the first time. This amendment introduced a system of direct election to the District Board instead of the hitherto prevailing system of indirect election. On an analysis of the status of the members of the Board in 1927 28 it appears that the land-holding class constituted 60 per cent, pleaders and mukhtears 22.5 per cent, Government servants 12.5 per cent and others 5 per cent. This shows the larger influence of the land-holding class on the electorate. This was so because the franchise was more or less restricted to property and educational qualifications.

The Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act of 1924-25 was a big step but it was not absolutely free from official control.

One-fourth of the members of the District Board were still nominated by the Government. The franchise being of a limited character kept out the bulk of the villagers. There was not much of attempt on the part of the candidates to enlighten the electorate as to their rights or obligations. The organisation of the Board changed with a fresh election. From 1924, the election of the Board began to be held every three years till 1933 when the life of the Board was extended to five years. In 1941 the Government in the Local Self-Government had to supersede the Saran District Board and place the administration of the Board under the charge of a Special Officer while the three Local Boards of the district remained under the supervision of the respective three Subdivisional Officers concerned. It was on the 22nd November 1947 that the District Board was released from supersession. A fresh election was held and a new Board was constituted. The same Board continued till 1958 when by an ordinance the District Board of Saran along with the other District Boards in the State was vested in the State Government. The District Magistrate took over the District Board and a Special Officer was appointed by the Government in the Local Self-Government Department to run the affairs of the District Board.

The year 1947 was also important in the history of Local Self-Government as in this year the Bihar *Panchayat Raj* Act, 1947, was passed. The Act was put into effect in the district from 1949. The working of the *Panchayats* has been discussed later.

The Local Self-Government Act of 1950 tried to improve on the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act of 1924-25. Section 7 of the previous Act (Bihar Act III of 1885) was substituted in the Bihar Local Self-Government (Amendment) Act of 1950. The substituted section runs as follows :—

"7. (1) The State Government shall by notification fix—

(*a*) the total number of members constituting a District Board, not exceeding 50 in number.

(*b*) such number of members as may be elected,

(*c*) such number of members of the scheduled castes, but in any case not less than three in number, as there are Local Boards within the district, to be co-opted by the elected members of such Board in such manner as may be prescribed:

Provided that at least one member shall be co-opted from the area over which each of the Local Boards has authority.

(2) Subject to the provisions of section 11, the members to be elected under this section shall be elected on the basis of adult suffrage."

Although this amendment was done and the principle or the election to be held on the basis of adult franchise was recognised, no election was held and the same Board of 1947 was allowed to continue.

The constitution of the District Boards and Local Boards in Bihar received a set back by the Ordinance no. VI of 1958, promulgated by the Governor of Bihar. This ordinance was promulgated under clause (1) of Article 213 of the Constitution of India By notification no. 8001-L.S.-G., dated the 12th September 1958, it was proclaimed that " In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Bihar District Boards and Local Boards (Control and Management) Ordinance, 1958 (Bihar Ordinance no. VI of 1958), the Governor of Bihar is pleased to direct that all the members of the District Boards and Local Boards including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of such Boards constituted under the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act of 1885 (Ben. Act III of 1885) shall vacate their respective offices with effect from the 15th September 1958 ". In pursuance of this ordinance sixteen District Boards including Saran District Board with their respective Local Boards were taken over by the Government. The reasons for this step are given in the Bihar District Boards and Local Boards (Control and Management) Bill, 1958, as follows .—

> " The District Boards and Local Boards constituted under the provisions of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act of 1885, have outlived their utility under their completely changed circumstances On attainment of independence, there have been development on a very large scale in the various fields of activities, viz., Agriculture, Industry, Co-operation, Gram Panchayats, etc. These developments call for a complete reorientation in the conception and constitution of District Boards and Local Boards so that these bodies could fulfil their role effectively in the changed circumstances. This is not possible unless the existing law is carefully examined in the light of these developments and amended suitably to meet the present needs of the society.

> " The Balvantrai Mehta Committee on the Community Development and National Extension Service have made a number of recommendations specially with regard to future set up of District Boards. These recommendations require detailed examination and careful consideration before the State Government could come to a definite decision in the matter, which will obviously take some considerable time. Besides some of the sister States in India are considering legislation regarding the constitution and powers of these local bodies and it is necessary to examine the provisions

of these laws and their actual working for some time before we embark on a comprehensive amendments of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act.

"It is, therefore, clear that the new set up of District Boards undoubtedly require comprehensive amendment of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act, 1885. It was accordingly decided by the State Government, to take over temporarily for three years, the control and management of District Boards and Local Boards, pending consideration of their future set-up. The Bihar District Boards and Local Boards (Control and Management) Ordinance, 1958, has been promulgated to give effect to this decision.

"The Bill seeks to convert an ordinance into an Act of the State Legislature as the ordinance will cease to have effect after six weeks from the commencement of the present session of the State Legislature."

In this way the Saran District Board which was constituted as the result of the elections in 1947 was vested in the State Government.

MUNICIPALITIES.

There are three municipalities in the district, viz., Chapra, Siwan and Revelganj. The total area under municipal administration is 10.75 square miles with a population of 98,255 souls.

The Municipal Board consists of the representatives of the different wards into which a municipal area is divided. These representatives are called Municipal Commissioners and they elect the executive, the head of which is the Chairman. While the majority of the commissioners are elected there are a few members nominated by the Government. Election is held every five years on the basis of adult franchise.

The chief duties of the Chairman of the Municipal Board are–

(*a*) to preside at the meetings of the municipality;

(*b*) to watch over the financial and executive administration and to perform such other executive functions as may be performed by the municipality; and

(*c*) to exercise supervision and control over the acts and proceedings of all officers and servants of municipality.

The executive next to the Chairman is the Vice-Chairman who is entitled to perform all the abovementioned functions in absence of the Chairman. Under the Act the Chairman can also delegate certain powers to the Vice-Chairman. The Act groups municipal functions into two categories, obligatory and optional. The obligatory function includes consideration of all matters essential to sanitation, health, safety and convenience and well-being of the

population while the optional function includes matters which are not considered absolutely essential, viz., construction of parks, gardens, libraries, *dharamshalas*, rest houses, etc.

The Chapra Municipality, the oldest in the district, was established in 1864. The Board consists of 40 members out of which 32 are elected on the basis of adult franchise and 8 are nominated by the State Government. The municipal area is 7½ square miles and has a population of 64,309 souls consisting of 33,939 males and 30,370 females according to 1951 census. There are four wards and the number of rate-payers in 1957-58 was only 12,930. The municipality controls construction of houses within the municipal limit. The duties and powers of the municipality are prescribed in the Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act, 1922.

The chief sources of income are the municipal rates and taxes, marketing tax and the grant from the Government. The municipality levies taxes on all types of conveyances. In 1958 tax was levied on 119 bullock-carts, 71 *tamtams* and 556 rickshaws. The principal items of expenditure are conservancy, medical and education. The figures of income and expenditure in the last five years were as follows :—

Years.			Income.	Expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1952-53	..	..	3,84,898	4,39,697
1953-54	..	..	4,03,254	4,46,993
1954-55	..	.	4,03,099	3,86,427
1955-56	.	.	3,43,628	3,68,606
1956-57	..	.	3,38,617	5,23,966

It will be seen that the expenditure usually exceeds the income and the deficit is met by grants from Government. The services offered by the municipality are not adequate for the large population of the town. Inadequacy of finance is said to be the main reason for the inadequate amenities offered. There are only 382 employees for the disposal of night-soil and refuge. The arrangement for the removal of night-soil is still primitive. The usual method is to remove night-soil in buckets on the head of the sweepers, which is not a very graceful sight. The condition of the roads is rather bad and there is hardly any proper drainage for the whole town. The total length of *pucca* drain was 10 miles and of *kutcha* 43 miles in 1958. The municipality maintains 33.78 miles metalled and 7.09 miles unmetalled roads.

There are 1,130 deep and shallow wells, 1,137 tube-wells, 176 hydrants and 725 house connections for the supply of water. The figures relate to the year 1957-58. A skeleton tap water scheme has

been in operation from 1956. There are two water towers, the capacity of which is 1 lakh gallons each. These two water towers are not sufficient to supply adequate water to the whole town. There is no fire service squad in the town.

The services of a qualified Health Officer have been placed at the disposal of the municipality. He looks after and supervises sanitation, slaughterhouses, markets and controls the vaccination section. The occasional outbreak of the epidemics keep him quite engaged.

The municipality maintained 246 electric lights and 298 kerosine oil lights in 1957-58. In consideration of the area and the length of the roads the number of lights is extremely inadequate. Primary education has been made compulsory within the municipal area. There are 60 primary schools and 4 middle schools. The expenditure incurred by the municipalities under Education in 1955-56 was Rs. 88,388, in 1956-57 Rs. 1,01,071 and in 1957-58 Rs. 1,14,316.

Siwan Municipality.

Siwan Municipality was constituted in 1869. It has a Municipal Board consisting of 16 members out of which 13 are elected and 3 are nominated. The area is 2 square miles and the population is 22,625 consisting of 11,934 males and 10,691 females. The number of rate-payers is 4,145 only. The average annual income during five years ending 1957-58 was Rs. 1,27,654 and the expenditure was Rs. 1,15,702 as against Rs. 25,426 and Rs. 24,024 in the quiquennium ending 1920-21. The main sources of income and expenditure are the same as in Chapra Municipality. Siwan Municipality maintains 15 primary schools. The income and expenditure of the municipality of the last five years are given below :—

Years.			Receipts.	Expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1953-54	..	..	1,10,966	1,02,469
1954-55	..	..	1,34,722	1,21,174
1955-56	..	..	1,12,466	1,10,686
1956-57	..	..	1,34,769	1,13,199
1957-58	..	..	1,45,347	1,30,983

Revelganj Municipality.

Constituted in 1876, this municipality has now 16 commissioners out of which 13 are elected and 3 nominated. The area is 1½ square miles and the population, according to 1951 census, is 11,321 souls consisting of 5,411 males and 5,910 females. It maintains 4½ miles metalled roads and 10 miles kutcha roads. The total number of

houses is about 2,100. The sources of income and the items of expenditure are the same as in the case of Chapra Municipality. The income and expenditure for the last five years ending 1957-58 are as follows :—

Years.			Receipts.	Expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1953-54	..	..	40,624	44,696
1954-55	..	..	66,379	58,720
1955-56	.	..	55,648	56,525
1956-57	..	.	67,373	68,483
1957-58	.	..	47,486	54,512

Town Planning and Public Health.

There is no scheme for town planning in the district. The towns have been allowed to grow in a haphazard manner. The *bazar* portion is extremely congested. There is no segregated slum area. Some of the slum areas are in a very filthy condition. There is no scheme for the building of tenements to replace the slum areas The majority of the houses are built of bricks and mortar. The re-enforced cement and concrete houses are now coming up. Parks and recreation spots are an exception. The red light areas are not segregated.

As mentioned before Chapra Municipality maintains a qualified doctor who is in charge of sanitation and conservancy. There is a District Medical Officer who looks after the administration of public health measures in the district outside the limits of the municipality. The designation of the Civil Surgeon who is the head of the Medical Department in the district has now been changed into that of Senior Executive Medical Officer. The Senior Executive Medical Officer combines in him both the preventive and the curative sides of medical administration His post has been made a non-practising one and he is expected to be constantly touring within the district and he visits the various blocks and municipal areas and inspects the medical and public health measures. The district is being slowly covered by Blocks consisting of a chain of villages and in charge of Block Development Officers who are also called Anchal Adhikaris. The scheme is to give a doctor to each of the Blocks so that the rural areas get the benefit of a qualified doctor.

District and Local Boards.

It has already been mentioned that the District Board was established in 1886. Outside the Municipalities, Notified Area Committees and Union Boards, the maintenance of local affairs, such as the maintenance of roads and bridges, the control of ferries, pounds and medical relief, etc., rest with the District Boards and Local Boards.

Organisation and Structure.

The area administered by the District Board is about 2,642 square miles with a total population of 30,55,304 according to 1951 census. The Board was wholly elected and composed of 50 members out of which three seats were reserved for members of Scheduled Castes. Although as mentioned earlier the District Board is now vested in the State Government the chief functions of the Chairman of the Board according to the Act may be described. His chief functions are—

(*a*) to preside over the meetings of the Board;

(*b*) to watch over the financial and executive administration of the Board;

(*c*) to exercise supervision and control over the acts and proceedings of all officers and servants of the Board in matters of executive administration and in matters concerning the records and accounts of the Board; and

(*d*) to dispose of all questions pertaining to the service of the officers and servants, their pay and allowances subject to certain limitation prescribed by rules framed under the Act.

The chief obligatory duties of the Board are—

(*i*) the construction of roads and other means of communication and the maintenance and repairs;

(*ii*) construction and repairs of hospitals and dispensaries, other public buildings, tanks and wells vested in it,

(*iii*) public vaccination and rural sanitary works; and measures necessary for public health;

(*iv*) maintenance of ferries and *ghats;* and

(*v*) the planting and preservation of trees by the side or in the vicinity of roads vesting in the Board.

The Government by an amendment of the Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Act has created the District Education Fund in charge of a District Superintendent of Education since May, 1954, and payment of teachers from primary to middle schools are now made by the District Superintendent of Education. Apart from this some powers which so far vested either in the District Board and Local Boards have been vested in the District Superintendent of Education. No teacher could be appointed without the consent of the District Superintendent of Education. As an ancillary to this measure the powers delegated to the Local Boards in respect of education have been cancelled from September, 1954. In matters of transfer of the teachers, however, the Chairman enjoyed the previous privilege but in this also the consent of the District Superintendent of Education was essential.

Finance.

The receipt of the District Board under different heads during the decennial periods beginning from 1887-88 was as follows :—

Heads.	1887-88.	1897-98.	1907-08.	1917-18.	1927-28	1937-38.	1947-48	1953-54.	1954-55.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Closing balance of last year	1,92,524	5,110	1,94,762	53,249	46.286	8,224	9,48,107	14,37,303	15,10,252
LAND REVENUE.									
Local Rates (Road)	*1,51,236	1,63,333	1,73,678	3,50,800	4,34 571	4,27,958	4,90,064	7,34,103	6,09,268
Interest	..	7,670	3,938	2,951	8,010	6,996	7,002	13,510	11,204
Law and Justice ..	..	.	.	8 262	18,666	8,183	2,945	666	1,824
Police	4,645	7,285	6.272	8,397	8,817	6,517	108	96	47
Education .. .	1,268	1,169	1,587	73,054	2.21,602	2,54,731	3,29,199	11,32,379	6,324
Medical	..	493	12,221	14,738	22,403	35,246	1,97,410	1,95,675	2,01,147
Scientific and other minor departments.	..	1,564	835	1,412	2,287	5,388	358	21,299	21,253
Receipts in aid of superannuation.	.	.	..	.	..	..	..	..	..
Stationery and Printing ..		..	..	392	557	594	1,038	718	1,595
Miscellaneous	1,598	15,586	8,497	384	1,093	3,409	3,53,787	5,46,293	2,09,589
Civil Works . ..	..	41,613	58,836	22,865	36.876	97,013	1 03,539	2,76,652	3,35,677
Contribution	.	9,112	18,170	.	..	.	.	.	..
TOTAL INCOME ..	1,58,767	2,47,805	2,84,034	4,83,455	7.54,894	8,46,062	14,85,450	29,21,391	13,97,928
TOTAL INCOME—Including opening (closing of last year) balance.	3.99,124	3,23,770	5,11,634	5,55,538	12,33,699	9.78,750	25,01,608	44,15,701	30,75,530
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a p	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a p.
Incidence of taxation per head of population.	..	0 1 1	0 1 2	0 2 6	0 3 6	0 2 10	0 2 10	0 3 10	0 3 2
Incidence of income per head of population (excluding balance).	..	0 2 1	0 1 11	0 3 7	0 5 3	0 5 7	0 8 2	0 15 9	0 8 2

*Balance of the District Road Fund under the Cess Act, 1880.

The main source of income of the District Board is a cess derived from the land revenue which is utilised for the construction and maintenance of roads. This cess is known as the road cess. It will appear from the above table that in 1887-88 the road cess was Rs. 1,51,236 as against Rs. 6,09,268 in 1954-55. At first the road cess was levied at the rate of 6 pies in a rupee but now the rate has been raised to 2 annas in a rupee under the Cess Act. Government grants under different heads, particularly Education, Medical, Miscellaneous and Civil Works have gone on increasing. The increase in the receipts under Education is attributable to the increased Government grants owing to the enhanced salary to teachers, grants for provident fund and contingencies.

The expenditure incurred by the District Board under these heads since 1887-88 decadewise is as follows :—

Years.		Education.	Medical and Health.	Roads.	Total.
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1887-88	.	19,335	23	1,41,176	1,60,534
1897-98	..	23,168	8,671	35,408	67,247
1907-1908	..	40,238	14,766	2,12,328	2,67,332
1917-18	..	92,429	57,945	1,15,954	2,66,328
1927-28	..	2,97,061	1,28,494	2,15,668	6,41,223
1937-38	..	3,10,370	1,50,467	2,11,367	6,72,204
1947-48	..	6,41,227	2,54,340	4,03,675	12,99,242
1953-54	..	15,65,736	4,40,742	4,91,589	24,98,067
1954-55	..	6,88,294	4,85,842	7,16,529	18,90,665

The above statistics will show a progressive expansion of education and that is why the expenditure of Rs. 19,335 incurred in 1887-88 reached the figure of Rs. 15,65,736 in 1953-54. From 1954-55 with the creation of the Educational Fund under the District Superintendent of Education the Board ceased to have any control over educational purse.

It is of interest to note that Saran District Board was the pioneer in the State to introduce free primary education throughout the district in 1924-25. This pioneer work had coincided with the taking over of the charge of the Board of the first non-official Chairman. Under the devolution scheme sponsored by the Government, however, the maintenance and management of the primary schools was transferred to the three Local Boards of the district. Under the provisions of the Local Self-Government Act in 1924-25 specific allotments required for such transfer of educational institutions were made over to the respective Local Boards. The working of the District Board has not always been satisfactory as the supersession of the Board in 1947 shows. In the Annual Administration Report on

the working of the District Boards in Bihar and Orissa for 1924-25 the following observations were made :—

> " The difficulties into which some of the Tirhut Boards (Saran, Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga) have become involved owing to irresponsible action of their Local Boards recurring educational expenditure in excess of their income have already been touched upon. It is reported that drastic retrenchments in the direction of closing down schools either have been or are being affected in these districts and Government are aware of the difficulties which non-official Chairmen must experience in supervising and controlling their Local Boards but the fact remains that the exercise of such control is a statutory obligation imposed on the District Board in respect of its agents, Local Boards and that had due care been taken the present serious position from opening new schools and dispensaries owing to a timely realisation of their inability to maintain them. Saran in particular offered to refund the balance of Government grants for new buildings for this reason and has subsequently done so."

These remarks in 1924-25 were, however, belied later by the progress in primary education.

The expenditure figure for the decade ending 1927-28 was Rs. 1,28,494 as against Rs. 57,945 in 1917-18. Since then the expenditure figures have shown a regular upward trend. The major portion of the expenditure under Medical and Public Health items was borne by Government.

It is only natural that District Board should be spending much more money now than before for the maintenance of roads. In 1954-55 the total mileage of roads under District Board was 144.30 metalled, 870.17 unmetalled and 1,956.12 village roads. Most of the major roads of the district have been provincialised. It may be mentioned here that the Public Works Department in North Bihar came to take up the roads only since 1948. The Public Works Department had functioned for buildings only before that year. The other sources of income of the District Board are pounds, *ghats* and Dak Bungalows. There are 88 pounds and 12 *ghats* in the district. The receipts from the pounds are negligible. The *ghats* are important for keeping up the communication of the district at a fair level. There are 3 Dak Bungalows and 16 Inspection Bungalows. Owing to the improvement in the means of communication and quicker transport most of the old *Dharamshalas*, Dak Bungalows and Inspection Bungalows have considerably reduced. The Dak Bungalows and Inspection Bungalows do not offer proper amenities for a tourist who expects a proper fooding arrangement.

The receipts and expenditure of the District Board incurred during 1955-56 and 1956-57 are given below. Since the District Board had vested in the State in 1958 the figures will be of interest :—

Income Schedule.

——	1955-56.	1956-57
	Rs.	Rs.
(1) Provincial rate	3,83,240	5,82,040
(2) Interest	10,051	.
(3) Law and justice	474	682
(4) Police	139	199
(5) Education	..	..
(6) Medical	2,08,605	1,92,473
(7) Scientific and other minor departments.	21,407	21,298
(8) Stationery and Printing ..	2,226	512
(9) Miscellaneous	2,01,454	1,10,704
(10) Civil Works	1,40,058	4,27,563
(11) Total income	9,67,645	13,35,471
(12) Debts, deposits and advances ..	86,004	94,421
(13) Total Receipts	10,53,658	10,29,892
(14) Opening Balance	5,21,960	1,59,642

Expenditure Schedule.

——	1955-56.	1956-57.
	Rs.	Rs.
(1) Land revenue	13,094	6,398
(2) General Administration ..	91,058	95,751
(3) Police	21	..
(4) Education	107	597
(5) Public Health	2,30,121	2,04,285
(6) Medical	2,04,420	1,88,381
(7) Scientific and other minor departments.	76,104	64,007
(8) Superannuation allowances and pensions.	25,136	26,891
(9) Stationery and Printing ..	8,416	12,273
(10) Miscellaneous	19,406	12,331
(11) Famine relief	..	..
(12) Civil Works	6,31,945	4,70,981
(13) Total Expenditure	12,90,834	10,81,895
(14) Debts, deposits and advances ..	1,25,142	1,03,370
(15) Total charges	14,15,976	11,85,265
(16) Closing balance	1,59,642	4,04,269
(17) Grand Total	15,75,618	15,89,534

Local Boards.—There are three Local Boards constituted for the three subdivisions of the district, that is, Chapra, Siwan and Gopalganj. Formerly, all the members of the Local Board were nominated by the Government and the Subdivisional Officer used to act as the *ex-officio* Chairman. Nowadays the majority of the members are elected. The Sadar Local Board was constituted in 1887 under the Local Self-Government Act, 1885. But in 1902 the Sadar Local Board was abolished and was re-established in 1917-18. The Board consists of 14 members of whom 11 are elected and 3 nominated. The Siwan and Gopalganj Local Boards were constituted in 1895 and 1897, respectively. The strength of the members of the Siwan Local Board is 13, of whom 10 are elected and 3 nominated. The Gopalganj Local Board consists of 12 members, of whom 9 are elected and 3 nominated. The District Board annually allot a lump sum for the expenditure of the Local Boards. The powers of the Local Boards have much reduced since the creation of the District Education Fund under the District Superintendent of Education.

UNION BOARDS.

There were 13 Union Boards constituted under the Bihar and Orissa Village Administration Act, 1922, viz., Dighwara, Sonepur, Chetan Parsa, Naini, Manjhi, Mashrakh and Ekma in Sadar, Maharajganj, Khujua, Guthni and Mairwa in Siwan, Mirganj and Manjha in Gopalganj subdivision. But all the Union Boards have been replaced by Gram Panchayat.

NOTIFIED AREA COMMITTEE, GOPALGANJ.

Gopalganj, the headquarters of a subdivision bearing the same name had a Union Board which was constituted in 1925. With the growing township the Union Board was found to be incapable of coping with the problems and by notification no. 10128-L.S.-G., dated the 10th November 1955, the Union Board was converted into a Notified Area Committee. The Committee has 16 members all nominated including the Subdivisional Officer, Gopalganj, as the *ex-officio* Chairman. He is assisted by a Vice-Chairman.

The Notified Area Committee is constituted of the former villages Gopalganj, Jangalia, Khajuria, Hajiapur, Kaithowalia, Sarya Husni and Harkhua. These villages are intermingled with each other and are treated as mahallas of the town. The area of the Notified Area Committee is 3.62 square miles with a population of 14,213. The population comprises of mixed agriculturists, traders, servicemen, businessmen and labourers. The total length of roads is 20 miles out of which 7 miles are stone metalled. The town gets electricity from Mirganj power-house and the total number of lights on roads is 65 in 1958.

The Notified Area Committee is vested with powers and duties under the Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act, 1922. The Committee, however, is not exercising all the powers and duties under the Act.

The main sources of income are at present holding taxes and registration of vehicles. The figures of receipt and expenditure from 1955 to 1958 are as below :—

Year.	Receipt.	Expenditure
	Rs.	Rs.
1955-56	5,000	8,423
1956-57	17,424	10,376
1957-58	31,291	23,060

In all these three years the State Government have advanced a sum of Rs. 5,000 as loan to the Committee.

GRAM PANCHAYAT.

The Bihar Gram Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, was passed in 1947. The Act was put into operation in Saran district from 1949. The Gram Panchayat is entrusted with multifarious powers and functions. It undertakes planning and construction of roads, wells and works necessary for the villages. The Panchayat is to organise a voluntary force to check crime and to give protection. The Panchayat is vested with judicial powers but the Panchayat is enjoined to try to bring about a compromise first and only if it fails in bringing about a compromise to decide a case.

Generally a Panchayat is formed in an area which has a total population of 2,000 persons. Normally a number of villages falling within a radius of two miles are grouped together under one Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat is headed by a *Mukhiya* who is assisted by an executive committee consisting of 13 to 15 members elected on the basis of adult suffrage. The executive committee controls the annual budget and acts as a check on the *Mukhiya*. The *Mukhiya's* post has become coveted one in the village economy and it seldom goes uncontested.

There is a panel of 15 *Panches* or members which has a head known as the *Sarpanch*. The chief job of the *Sarpanch* is to preside over the Gram Cutchery meetings and to try cases with the help of two *Panches* who are selected by the contesting parties.

The expansion of the Gram Panchayats has been rapid. In 1949-50 there were 20 Panchayats as against 47 in 1950-51 and 113 in 1951-52. In 1956-57 the number of Panchayats went to 429. There are also non-official Panchayats which expect to gain recognition after a certain period. In 1956-57 there were 150 non-official Panchayats. A total population of 21 lakhs or about 67 per cent of the total population was covered by the Panchayats, official and non-official, in 1956-57.

The District Panchayat Officer is the administrative head of this institution and has to work under the superintendence, direction and control of the District Magistrate. Supervision work is done by the

Supervisor, whose total strength in the district in 1957 was 12. Besides them, in every Block there is a Co-operative Supervisor who also looks after the Gram Panchayat within his block area. The number of Blocks in 1956-57 was 15 in the district. There are four Instructors, one in each three subdivisions of the district and other one is the Head Instructor who is placed at the district headquarters. Their main function is to organise night patrolling and impart training to village voluntary force or the chief officers. They also function as the police in the rural areas. Their number in 1956-57 was 358.

At the lowest level are the *Gram Sewaks,* who are paid Government servants. In 1956-57 the number of *Gram Sewaks* was 414. They assist the *Mukhiyas* in maintaining registers and statistics and also function as a bench clerk of the *Sarpanch.*

The total number of Gram Panchayat courts was 393 in 1957-58 in the district. These courts are known as Gram Kutcheries. Besides them there are 3 Panchayat courts established under the Village Administration Act. The Panchayat courts try civil cases of the value not exceeding 100 rupees and in special cases up to Rs. 200 if concerned with movable properties. They also try petty criminal cases. In civil cases these courts are under the administrative jurisdiction of the respective Munsif and in criminal cases of the Subdivisional Officer.

Financial Resources.

The Gram Panchayats are invested with powers to raise taxes, e.g., property tax, professional tax, that is, tax on any business conducted within the area. There is compulsory labour tax payable by all able-bodied males between the age of 18 to 50 years. The minimum tax payable by every tax-payer is 12 units or 48 hours of manual labour per annum. Cash payment in lieu of labour tax is permissible, in case of invalids or those who are incapable for manual labour. The proceeds of the tax are mainly utilised in development works. The Government had entrusted rent collection work to 13 Gram Panchayats in 1954-55 and to 99 in 1956-57.

The following statement shows the expenditure of Gram Panchayats for the years 1956-57 and 1957-58 :--

Heads of expenditure.	1956-57.			1957-58.	
	Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	nP.
(1) Pay of establishment ..	2,04,806	1	0	2,42,049	01
(2) Cost of living allowance ..	6,699	1	0	8,862	63
(3) Travelling allowance ..	9,874	8	0	13,952	40
(4) Contingencies	2,844	0	0	3,040	00
(5) Grant-in-aid	2,000	0	0	..	
Total ..	2,26,223	10	0	2,67,904	04

The expenditures are met by the allotment made by the Government for the Gram Panchayats.

As to the constructive work by the Panchayats it is claimed that in the course of five years, that is, from 1952-53 to 1956-57 they have sunk 1,012 wells and have repaired and disinfected a large number of them. Vaccination of persons and inoculation of cattle, sinking of soakage pits, bore-hole latrines and trench latrines have also engaged their attention. The Gram Panchayats are running 457 libraries and have constructed 157½ miles of village roads. They repaired 477½ miles of old roads. For all these construction works the Panchayats had raised Rs. 32,072 as property tax and Rs. 3,71,763 as labour tax.

In 1955-56 seven Gram Panchayats were engaged in the construction of the Mahi Embankment which has a total length of 18 miles By 1956-57 the Gram Panchayats had disposed of 5,158 criminal cases and 4,001 civil suits.

CHAPTER XIV.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EDUCATION.

A separate organised State department for education does not appear to have been the feature of the administration of the district in the ancient or mediæval times. The State or the local chiefs or the nobility did give liberal donations by the way of rent-free lands or money grants for the cause of education but the agency was more or less voluntary and not subject to supervision or day-to-day interference. The duty of imparting education was considered a noble profession for which the very idea of monetary payment in return was considered to be undignified. The *Munis* or the *Rishis*, the *Sramanas*, other highly educated or cultured Pandits would take students at their own *tols* or *ashrama* and educate them for years. Usually the students lived in the *ashramas* of the *guru* where the *guru* also had his residence. The *gurus* used to get patronage by way of gifts of land or monetary grants but the arrangement for imparting education was more or less, dependent on private initiative. Fees were not normally levied. Working in the house-hold of the *guru* was a normal duty of the student. Formation of character was looked upon as the main responsibility of the *guru*. The student was expected to lead a pure abstemious life and be a true *Brahmachari* till he had graduated from the *tol*. The student lived under the same roof as a younger brother or son of the *guru*.

Selection of the *guru* or teacher was given a great priority. Usually secluded spots or *ashramas* somewhat outside the villages, right on the fringes of a jungle would be the centre of learning. Naturally, environments had a good deal to do with the selection of the spot for an *ashrama*. Some of the *gurus* excelled in a particular branch of knowledge and students who wanted to specialise in that lore would go to that *guru* Students were also selected for such specialised courses. In the description of Nalanda University we find ample references to corroborate the theory that the intending scholars would be allowed to cross the gate of the Campus only when he could satisfy the *Pandits* who kept guard of the gates.

Saran which derives its name from the Sanskrit word *saran*, meaning an asylum, was full of forests. Local tradition asserts that in the forest of Godna (Revelganj), there was the residence or *ashrama* of the learned sage Gautama, the founder of the school of *Nyaya* philosophy. It is said that once Gautama was employed to officiate at a sacrifice performed by Raja Nimi of Mithila instead of his family priest Vasistha. The *ashrama* of Gautama must have attracted a large number of students. To commemorate Gautama, a Sanskrit school was built at Godna by public subscriptions between the years 1883 and 1887. The foundation-stone was laid by Sir Rivers

Thompson, Lieutenant Governor-General of Bengal. The school was called at first the Thompson Gautama Pathshala but now it is known as Gautama Pathshala. It teaches *Nyaya* philosophy and Sanskrit literature.

Semaria near Godna village is taken to be the traditional seat of the famous scholar Datta Traya. Places like Cherand in the district have old remains which indicate a high level of culture. Hiuen Tsiang's account of Saran district near about the middle of the seventh century A. D. also shows a high level of culture and education of the people. Traditionally the *maths* and *kutiyas* (hermitages) of the spiritualistic *gurus* used to attract students and disciples. It was almost a common feature that there should be a *Pathshala* to every *math* and temple.

During Muslim rule also there was a certain amount of State patronage to the seats of learning although the slant was more towards the diffusion of Persian and Urdoo languages in selected areas. Like the *Pathshala* attached to the temple there used to be a *maktab* attached to the mosque where the children of the neighbourhood irrespective of caste or creed received education from a *Mullah*. That Bihar was quite prominent is shown by the fact that during the reign of Balban, the Emperor of Delhi, she was the preaching ground of the Chisti and Qadri orders of Sufiism. A large number of *khankahs* and *dargahs* (endowments) were set up and Muslim divines used to move about from village to village propagating Muslim theology. It is said that Makdum Saiyid Hasan Chisti, a saint from Arabia visited Hasanpura, a village in Siwan subdivision, and founded a *khankah* and *dargah*. Another Muslim saint, Shah Arjan of Patna is said to have established a *khankah* at Larki Dargah which was endowed by the emperor Aurangzeb. There are still some seats of Muslim culture in the district of Saran. Hindus also freely learnt Urdoo along with Hindi and the correspondence was carried on both in Urdoo and in Hindi. This continued right till the end of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth centuries.

There is a tradition that the famous Datta Traya who had 24 *gurus* lived at Semaria near Godna. Some places in Saran like Cherand are said to have Buddhistic remains. On the basis of these it is conjectured about the existence of some schools for the local *upasaka* or lay disciple for the propagation of the Buddhist philosophy and *dharma*. From the account of Hieun Tsiang who visited Saran in the middle of the seventh century A. D., it appears that the people were believers both in heretical and true doctrine.*

.From the ancient scriptures it is evident that education was confined mostly among the Brahmans and Khatriyas. The curriculum of education for Vaisya was different from the first two while the Sudras were totally denied the privilege of education. Educational

* S. Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World (1884), Vol. I, page 62.

career of a child usually in those days began after attaining the age of five years and continued till twenty-five years. This period was called *Brahmcharyya ashram* and during this period the pupil had to observe utmost discipline, decorum, decency and obedience. On the eve of initiation or admitting a child in the *ashram* of a learned sage, he had to perform a sanskar and by virtue of it he was usually invested with the nomenclature of *batu* or *vidyarthi* (pupil). Apart from the *ashram*, a *pathshala* was attached to almost every *math* and temple where elementary education was imparted.

A specialised department of education was unknown in the age of the Muslim rulers. It does not appear to have been a full-fledged State subject. But some of the Muslim rulers did much towards the diffusion of education. The emperors as well as many of the grandees encouraged education by grants of land or money to mosques, monasteries and to individual saints and scholars without any distinction of creed. Education in mediæval period was recognised as a religious and not as social duty and as such the enlightened kings and nobles sometimes encouraged the cause of education. A *maktab* was attached to every mosque, where the boys and girls of the neighbourhood received education from a *Mullah*. We know that during the reign of Balban, the emperor of Delhi, Bihar became the preaching ground of the prominent Chisti and Qadri orders of Sufism. Many of the saints of Islam in their proselytising spirit established religious institutions like *khankahs* and *dargahs* and for the upkeep of these institutions grants were made from time to time by the Muslim emperors. A mosque was build at Amarpur during the time of Shahjehan (1628—1658). As said before these tombs, *khankahs*, and mosques were the chief centres of education during the Muslim period.

GROWTH OF EDUCATION FROM 1774 TO 1858.*

The early English Correspondence Volumes available in the Saran Record Room from 1794 to near about 1858 may be utilised for a picture of education and literacy within the district. One important feature that strikes one in going through the scanty references of education in the correpondence volumes is that a good deal of importance was laid on the knowledge of the current Indian languages, namely, Persian, Urdoo and Hindi. An extract of a resolution of the Governor-General in Council, dated the 24th January 1794, was forwarded to the Magistrate at Saran and this laid particular stress on the knowledge of the Persian language as an indispensable qualification for due performance of the duties of a Judge of the Provincial Courts of Circuit. It was held that an experience of the inferior office of Judge and Magistrate was necessary for the superior post of a Judge of the Provincial Court of Circuit. Therefore, it was resolved, "that no person in future be appointed Judge

* *Sarkar Saran*, by Sri P. C. Roy Chaudhury.

of a Provincial Court of Circuit who shall not previously have acted for a competent time in the capacity of Judge or Magistrate ".

The correspondence volumes near about 1794 have a number of notices both in the Persian and Nagri character.

Vernacular Encouraged.

In a volume of letters received from the Commissioner of Revenue and Sadar Board from January, 1837 to October, 1837, kept in the Saran Record Room there is an important letter, dated the 30th June 1837, from the Secretary to Government, Bengal, to Trevelyan, Officiating Additional Secretary to the Sadar Board of Revenue. It was laid down in this letter that the Hon'ble Court of Directors was extremely anxious with which the Governor of Bengal fully agreed that the vernacular language of the people should resume its proper place from which it has been so long banished in the transaction of the business of the country. It was mentioned that the transaction of the public business carried in the language of the people was an unorganised good. The European public authorities, it was laid down, should be so intimately acquainted with the vernacular tongue as to be able to conduct business in it without any necessary interposition of the Indian *Amla*.

Ignorance of English—No Disqualification.

At one place in this letter it was mentioned " His Lordship considers it decidedly inexpedient to declare ignorance of the English language to be a disqualification for the highest situation tenable by a native in a close office. Such a rule would certainly exclude many of the ablest, and not, he believes, the least trustworthy individuals, those who have long served in subordinate appointment from all course of advancement ". At another place it was mentioned " His Lordship holding these opinions the Board may depend upon his cordial support in carrying through the beneficial change which has been commenced by them; he wishes it to be distinctly understood that in his view that change ought to be limited to the introduction of the vernacular language into other department of business, except the correspondence between the European officers and English should be substituted for Persian in the last mentioned case only ".

The importance of the vernacular language was again emphasised in a circular issued by Sadar Board of Revenue, Fort William on the 26th of February 1840 (copy of which is in Saran Record Room) regarding the introduction of the Oordoo language written in Nagri character as the language of record. The circular mentioned that the authorities of the district in which the Oordoo language was current were required to take measure for introducing the use of the Nagri character in writing that language and to report the practice which had been made in that respect. All the Civil and

Sessions Judges, Magistrates, Joint Magistrates in the Provinces and the Governor-General's Agent at Hazaribagh were required to take decisive steps in the matter after making proper enquiries on the subject. The circular along with the other scattered references make it clear that originally Persian and Oordoo languages were more patronised than Hindi in Saran district by the literate class. Hindi had slowly substituted the place of Persian and Oordoo in Saran along with many other districts in Bihar. The circular just quoted may be compared with the letter, dated the 14th June 1837, in which the Commissioner of the Patna Division sent to the Collector of Saran Circular no. 45, dated the 30th May from the Board of Revenue regarding exclusive use of the English and vernacular languages in Revenue matters. In this circular it was mentioned that Persian may be substituted by the vernacular languages. The European officers as well as those Indian officers who were qualified to do so should carry on their official correspondence in English language only. All orders whether original or passed on petitions or other papers addressed to European officers must be invariably written in English. All documents which were intended for the information of the people were ordered to be written in the vernacular language of the district, whatever that may be.

Hindi Schools.

Although there was an encouragement to the vernacular languages by indirect method the early British administrators do not appear to have taken any direct initiative for subordinate schools till about 1837. A letter from the Collector of Saran to the Commissioner, dated the 20th March 1854 (no. 121 of the Volume 1853-1854) mentioned about the dearth of schools and that Persian and a little Arabic were more popular with the sons of the educated people. It was mentioned in the letter that Hindi schools were chiefly attended by the sons of *Banias* and shopkeepers. Schooling fee per student was about 1 anna to 2 annas per month. Usually a Hindi teacher stayed in the house of a *Bania* and collected 20 to 40 boys and taught them to read, write and keep accounts. Big towns had very few schools. At Maharajganj only one *guru* was teaching about 25 boys for an anna a month from each boy. It was also mentioned that Persian and Oordoo Maulvis were patronised by the upper class of people particularly the Kayasthas.

The earliest letter that has been so far found to give an important picture of the progress of education in Saran district and which suggests direct initiative is letter no. 40, dated the 20th June 1863, from the Collector of Saran, to the Commissioner, Patna Division. This letter is available in the volume of letters sent from May, 1863, to March, 1865.

Chapra Institution.

From the letter it appears that there was only one big school in Chapra known as the Chapra Institution which gave instruction

in English and vernacular languages to 227 students. The daily average attendance was 178. The school was affiliated for Entrance Examination. The Maharaja of Bettiah maintained an English school at Bettiah which also imparted English and vernacular education.

The vernacular schools were 26 in number and located in various parts of the district and of these 10 were designated as Government schools and 16 as zamindari schools. During the past year it was mentioned that there were 1,384 boys on the roll. The Rajas of Bettiah and Hutwah contributed towards the schools.

The Assistant Magistrate of Chapra appears to have been in charge of the schools. He visited the vernacular schools at Mobarakpur, Sooteehar, Uphur, Musruk, Hussunpur, etc. The Magistrate's observations are in this letter. He found the Musruk school in a very backward condition and the Siwan school was very favourably reported. The Assistant Magistrate thought that the schools were for the most part not in a very satisfactory state. "The prime cause of this lies in fear, in want of appreciation on the part of the community of their true interest. This will doubtless ere long awake as has taken place in Bengal to this appreciation, when they see that the children now emerging from schools." Another cause for the unsatisfactory condition of the schools, according to him, was want of proper discipline and the boys were allowed to come and go just as they please and this was mostly seen at schools where no fees were extracted as in the zamindari schools. The Assistant Magistrate observed that the Geographical maps were mostly kept as ornaments in the houses of the teachers. It was also suggested that there should be a change in the curriculum. They should first be able to read and write both characters Oordoo and Hindi and to multiply and add any numbers and then the boys may be encouraged to study (1) system of village account, (2) land surveying, and (3) forms of title deeds, leases, letters, etc., according as they wished to become *putwarees*, *amins*, clerks or for their own edification carrying on of course their arithmetical studies. For the boys seeking to be trained for higher schools the Assistant Magistrate thought there should be a course of Grammar, History and Geography of India and the like. He also appreciated that it was not likely that on the very poor salary that was current, men will be found with the necessary qualifications to teach these branches. The Assistant Magistrate suggested that there should be fees, if necessary, a small one levied at every zamindaree and Government schools and that there should be a *Naib* attached to every school without exception.

William Taylor, the much maligned Commissioner of the Patna Division of 1857 in which the districts of Saran and Champaran were included, did much for the cause of education. He was a great educationist and in his autobiography he has mentioned that he wanted the schools to be taken over direct by the Commissioner and

that the schools should be one of direct responsibility of the Magistrates. Taylor came to grief over his conduct in "Sepoy Mutiny" affairs and he had to face proceedings. One of the charges against him was his extra zeal and forcibly raising fund for the schools and a proposed college in Patna. Taylor had mentioned in his autobiography that his firm view was that unless the schools were taken over as the Commissioner's personal responsibility and made over to the Magistrates there could hardly be any improvement.

Growth of Education from 1870 to 1932.

In 1870-71 there were only nine schools maintained or aided by Government in the district, at which 585 boys received instruction. Within the next two years there was a great development owing to the introduction of Sir George Campbell's scheme for the advancement of vernacular education, by which the grant-in-aid rules were extended to village *pathshalas*. The result was that in 1872-73 there were altogether 228 schools attended by 5,421 pupils, besides 40 unaided primary schools. During the next twenty years progress was rapid and sustained, and the number of schools and scholars steadily increased until the famine of 1897, the number of educational institutions in 1895-96 being 1,204 attended by 29,467 pupils. Owing to the famine the number of schools decreased to 847 in 1896-97 and 779 in 1897-98, and the attendance in these two years to 22,847 and 20,813, respectively. In 1901-02 there were 951 schools with 26,705 pupils.

The progress of education in subsequent years was marked by steady and gradual increase both in the number of institutions and scholars. In 1911-12 there were altogether 1,042 institutions attended by 30,240 scholars: out of these 82 were female institutions with 1,156 pupils. It is noteworthy to mention here that the old correspondence volumes till 1864 do not mention anything about the education for the girls. The old *District Gazetteer of Saran*, published in 1908, mentions that there were 62 primary schools for girls and only 214 girls studied in boys' schools. It does not mention as to when girls' schools were founded. In the next decade, that is, in 1921-22 the number of institutions increased to 1.075 with 32,184 pupils. Though progress of education was perceptible, still the decade showed a downward tendency in the girls' education. The number of institutions decreased to 53 and the pupils to 1,014. The slight decrease in the institutions was attributed due to the conversion of the special schools, especially of *maktabs* into primary schools and the decrease of scholars was owing to abrupt fall in the private institutions. In 1921-22 the number of private institutions fell to 4 as against 25 in the preceding decade. A remarkable increase was recorded in 1928-29 in the number of institutions and scholars. The number of institutions shot up to 1,610 and the pupils to 71,763 or in course of seven years the number of institutions

increased by 60 per cent while the scholars by 123 per cent. A downward tendency is noticed in the succeeding year of 1931-32 when the number of institutions fell to 1,480 and the pupils to 65,684. It is incumbent to note that the period of 1931 witnessed the great world depression which was mainly responsible for the decline of the progress of education. The decline was noticed not only in the district of Saran but in the whole State of Bihar.

GROWTH OF EDUCATION FROM 1938 ONWARDS.

The year 1938 is the momentous event in the history of education of the district; which witnessed the opening of the Rajendra College, Chapra, after the name of our present distinguished President Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Prior to it there were no colleges in the district and the students after the completion of the secondary education went either to Patna or Muzaffarpur for further prosecution of their studies. In 1941 D. A. V. College, Siwan, was founded. The details of the higher education will be given further whereas here to all intents and purposes the progress of education as mentioned before has been confined up to the secondary education. The progress of education since 1941-42 is given below in a tabular form :—

Year.		Number of institution.			Number of pupils.		
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1		2	3	4	5	6	7
1941-42	..	1,479	126	1,605	84,768	5,992	90,760
1951-52	..	1,603	140	1,743	1,34,987	9,737	1,44,724
1953-54	..	1,854	149	2,003	1,33,778	9,385	1,43,163
1954-55	..	2,087	157	2,244	1,59,646	12,834	1,72,480
1955-56	..	2,298	203	2,501	1,82,712	16,093	1,98,805
1956-57	..	2,658	204	2,922	1,98,064	17,787	2,15,851

The table above discloses that in between the years 1941—1957 the number of institutions up to secondary stage for boys and girls had nearly doubled itself, and the total number of students of such institutions had shot up by nearly two and half times. This by itself appears praiseworthy but when compared to the total population would suggest that the overall progress is slow. In 1941-42 only about 3 per cent of the total population had benefited by these institutions up to the secondary standard while in 1956-57 the percentage had risen to about 7.

LITERATE POPULATION.

At the census of 1901 the percentage of literate males was 7.3 and of females 0.2. During the next ten years ending 1911 the number of literates increased but slightly, and at the end of that period the percentage was 7.6 for males and 0.3 for females. In 1921 the percentage of literates for males increased to 9.6 and for females 0.6. The census of 1951 enumerated 3,84,423 persons as literates consisting of 3,39,978 males and 44,445 females. Thus in course of three decades the total percentage of literacy reached to 12.19 which was 22.58 for males and 2.66 for females.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD.

Educational standard of the people is not satisfactory. According to the census of 1951 there are 3,40,880 persons who can only read and write but have not passed the middle examination and have been classified under "literate" population. The table below will show the educational standard of the people of the district :—

Educational standard.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
Literate	3,40.880	2,99,285	41,595
Middle School	28,693	26,345	2,348
Matriculate	8,048	7,827	221
Intermediate	1,284	1,216	23
Degrees or Diplomas—			
Graduate	934	918	16
Post-Graduate	171	167	4
Teaching	897	857	40
Engineering	25	24	1
Commerce	178	178	..
Agriculture	6	6	..
Veterinary	4	4	..
Legal	312	311	1
Medical	342	312	30
Others	2,649	2,483	166
Total	3,84,423	3,39,933	44,445

From the above statistics it becomes apparent that the higher studies are confined to a few persons. Next to literate comes the persons who have passed only the middle school examination, and next to it comes "others" under which those persons have been shown who have passed examination, such as, *Prathama, Madhyama, Sahityaratna, Visharad, Alim-Fazil,* etc. The statistics shed very gloomy picture so far as higher education and female education are concerned, but it must be borne in mind that these statistics had been taken at a time when the opportunity for higher education in the district was limited and practically there was no college for females. It is presumed that educational standard of the people must have increased to a good deal after a lapse of seven long years, especially at a time when the country had successfully completed the First Five-Year Plan and is prosecuting the Second Five-Year Plan, under which much emphasis is given on education.

SPREAD OF EDUCATION AMONG WOMEN AND BACKWARD CLASSES.

Women and the backward classes lagged much behind in the past so far as education was concerned. It was mainly due to the prevalence of some social practices which were the chief obstacles for it. The *purdah* system was the main obstacle on account of which girls were not sent to schools. The old *District Gazetteer, Saran*, published in 1930, mentions that besides primary schools there were special arrangements for the education of *purdahnashin* girls, namely, two lady peripatetic teachers. one Hindu and one Muhammadan, in Chapra town and three *atus,* two Hindus and one Muhammadan who collected children and gave them primary education. Later peripatetic schools were started in the big villages also and the measure proved successful to some extent, especially in arousing the consciousness of the masses to realise the importance of female education. When due to the consciousness of the people the grip of the *purdah* system loosened, they began to send their female wards to even boys' schools and consequently peripatetic system was abolished.

There are at present (1956-57) for girls 231 primary schools with 14,202 pupils, 6 middle schools with 829 pupils, one State-managed high school with 540 students in the district. Though there is no Basic school exclusively for girls yet they are allowed to prosecute their studies in the boys' schools. In 1956-57 there were 1,228 female scholars in all types of Basic schools.

The opening of the Jai Prakash Mahila Mahavidyalaya at Chapra in 1955 is a landmark in the history of female education of the district and removed various bottlenecks so far as the higher education of the female was concerned. This is the second college for women in the Tirhut Division; the first being the Mahanth Darshan Das College at Muzaffarpur. There were 50 students in the session of 1956-57 and almost all the staff were females, who hailed mostly from the district.

Apart from general education the females have made steady progress in other spheres also. At Chapra there is an industrial school locally known as the Mahila Shilpa Vidyalaya. The school is aided by the Industries Department. To all practical purposes the school is under the supervision and control of the Sadar Municipality. It imparts training in embroidery, knitting and weaving and tailoring. The strength of students in 1956-57 was 176 as against 140 in 1952-53. So far as other professional schools are concerned there is no school exclusively for girls, but they are permitted to read in the boys' school. In both the Senior and Junior Basic schools, invariably every year some females are also found which is evident from the statistics given further under the professional schools. There were 67 students in 1956-57 in all types of oriental schools as against 19 in 1952-53. Apart from the social centre schools for boys in which the females were also allowed to study there were 26 such schools exclusively for girls with 740 scholars.

There is a scheme under the Second Five-Year Plan to appoint a Lady Social Organiser in each Development Block for inculcating the importance of physical and mental advancement among the women-folk and up till May, 1958, seven Lady Social Organisers have been posted for the purpose out of the 13 Blocks of the district.

Backward Classes.

The spread of education, a few years back among the scheduled castes, was not satisfactory owing to social and economic factors. The Hindu law-giver like Manu had precluded the *sudras* to study the *Vedas* and the other sacred texts. To remove the social disabilities of the Harijans and the other backward classes, the State Government passed the Bihar Harijans (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act and undoubtedly the Act is doing useful work for the social uplift of the depressed classes. In 1948 a separate department known as Harijan Welfare Department was created in the district under a gazetted officer to look after the welfare of the backward classes under the State Welfare Department. The majority of the Harijans and backward classes belong to the class of the landless labourers and they are unable to spare money for meeting the expenses of education of their children. To remove the economic bottleneck the State Government had decided to bear practically all the expenses of the depressed classes on education. There were 26 Harijan lower primary schools in 1956-57 managed by the Welfare Department. One Junior-type Basic Residential school is functioning and 25 Harijan students are getting free food, cloth and lodging in this school. In the session 1956-57, 1,100 Harijan students, 203 backward Hindu students and 374 backward Muslim students were getting stipend, book-grant and hostel-grant in the district. The progress of education in Harijan and backward classes and the expenses incurred by the Government are given in the following table :—

Kinds of institutions.	1952-53.					1953-54.				
	Reserved.		Others.		Stipend (in rupees).	Reserved.		Others.		Stipend (in rupees).
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.		Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Primary ..	1,020	228	65,928	1,972	7,698	804	122	68,285	3,682	3,132
Middle ..	..	..	11,253	22	18,111	..	..	12,304	42	16,362
Senior Basic ..	..	..	2,361	38	..	..	..	2,201	64	..
Post Basic ..	..	..	12	..	.	..	.	11	..	..
Junior Basic ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
High ..	..	..	5,644	23	36,972	..	..	6,145	29	52,793
Training ..	..	..	54	..	11,825	..	..	62	..	10,520
Industry ..	..	..	..	83	6,712	..	..	..	84	5,100
Commercial ..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	7		
Agriculture ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.
Technology ..	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Oriental ..	..	..	110	5	..	..	..	125	6	..
Others ..	.	..	..	..	..	.	.	..	.	..
TOTAL ..	1,020	228	85,370	2,146	81,318	804	122	89,140	3,907	87,907

Kinds of institutions.	1954-55. Reserved. Boys.	1954-55. Reserved. Girls.	1954-55. Others. Boys.	1954-55. Others. Girls.	1954-55. Stipend (in rupees.).	1955-56. Reserved. Boys.	1955-56. Reserved. Girls.	1955-56. Others. Boys.	1955-56. Others. Girls.	1955-56. Stipend (in rupees).	1956-57. Reserved. Boys.	1956-57. Reserved. Girls.	1956-57. Others. Boys.	1956-57. Others. Girls.	1956-57. Stipend (in rupees.).
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Primary ..	1,114	290	72,327	5,160	2,408	1,603	383	74,087	5,682	3,809	1,749	397	74,762	5,813	4,347
Middle ..	..	..	13,185	180	8,941	..	..	13,493	243	22,620	..	..	16,799	210	22,181
Senior Basic ..	..	..	3,340	204	840	..	..	3,356	134	1,525	..	..	4,153	140	1,727
Post Basic ..	..	..	40	..	..	..	..	57	..	..	..	..	73	..	140
Junior Basic ..	..	..	1,581	102	..	..	..	3,240	95	..	..	..	4,769	149	..
High ..	..	..	7,842	36	38,691	..	..	8,882	47	62,125	.	..	10,506	31	75,129
Training .	..	..	66	..	11,088	..	..	67	..	19,144	..	..	88	1	24,612
Industry ..	..	..	..	95	5,520	..	..	..	84	..	..	..	..	82	..
Commercial ..	..	..	13	..	..	..	..	143	..	..	..	..	161	..	..
Agriculture ..	..	..	.	..	..	..	..	24	..	..	..	..	19	..	..
Technology ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	20	..	..	..	..	33	..	1,920
Oriental ..	..	..	114	..	..	..	..	124	3	..	..	..	219	11	..
Others ..	..	..	4,231	173	..	..	..	4,436	213	..	..	..	6,445	498	..
TOTAL ..	1,114	290	1,02,739	5,950	67,488	1,603	383	1,07,929	6,501	1,09,223	1,749	397	1,18,027	6,935	1,30,056

PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

The old District Gazetteer published in 1908 mentions that in 1906-07 there were 726 primary schools for boys with an attendance of 18,384 boys and 214 girls. It also records that as compared to 1896-97 the number of primary schools and the boys studying in them has more than doubled. The figures for the primary schools from 1921-22 onwards are as follows :—

Years.	Number of institutions.			Number of scholars.		
	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1921-22 ..	783	49	832	22,134	968	23,102
1931-32 ..	1,269	106	1,375	51,150	2,213	53,363
1941-42 ..	1,299	122	1,421	67,245	5,657	72,902
1951-52 ..	1,345	134	1,479	88,176	8,450	96,626
1953-54 ..	1,399	138	1,537	82,681	7,820	90.501
1954-55 ..	1,554	149	1,703	96,853	10,673	1,07,526
1955-56 ..	1,627	187	1,814	1,10,046	13,272	1,23,318
1956-57 ..	1,658	231	1,889	1,10,720	14,202	1,24,922

The comparative figures for the years between 1921-22 and 1931-32 show that the increase in number of both schools and scholars was appreciable. It is essential to mention here that the great depression of 1931 did not affect the progress of primary education, rather the increase in both the institutions and pupils was phenomenal, as the number of institutions increased in 1931-32 by 543 and the scholars by 30,261 from the preceding decade. The succeeding decade (1941-42) did not maintain the speed as there had been only a slight increase of 46 in the number of schools and 19,539 in the number of scholars. In 1951-52 the increase was not great and the year 1953-54 witnessed a little downward trend in the number of scholars. Fortunately the succeeding years marked a steady and gradual increase in both the number of institutions and scholars.

In all respects the primary schools of Saran are similar to those of the other districts of the State of Bihar. But in respect of free primary education it is precursor because free primary education was introduced in the district with effect from the 1st January 1924 whereas it has been made free all over the State from the year 1949.

COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Compulsory primary education has been introduced within the limits of the Sadar Municipality since 1939, which has resulted into an increase in the number of school-going children. This scheme has been in force for boys of five to ten years age-group. To secure attendance of boys two Attendance Officers have been appointed by

the municipality. The figures for compulsory primary education are as follows :—

Years.			Institutions. Boys.	Scholars. Boys.
1953-54	..	..	40	2,972
1954-55	..	..	40	3,142
1955-56	..	..	39	3,582
1956-57	..	..	42	3,609

The figures above are not inspiring. They would show that the number of such institutions imparting primary education to the boys of the age-group of 5—10 years has increased by only 2 and the scholars have increased by about 700. (The population of boys of this age-group within the Chapra Municipality according to 1951 census is 18,078. Only a very small percentage of the population of this age-group is taking advantage of the institutions.) Even remembering that many of the children of this age-group (5—10 years) may also be attending schools of other denomination, it could be generally said that no serious efforts have been made to enforce compulsory primary education and it has remained more or less on the papers. The economic condition of the people of lower income-group also stands on the way of their children going to the schools. Many of the children near about ten years of age are utilised for supplementing the family income.

BASIC EDUCATION.

Basic education was introduced in the district in 1949, and Basic schools were started at Thawe, Musepur, Rampur, Noornagar and Bangra. A Basic Training School for training of teachers on the basic line and a Post-basic School were started at Bangra in 1948. The basic education has achieved a rapid progress within its short span of life and is becoming popular in the district. The chief curriculum of it is the craftsmanship which includes agriculture, wood and metal work, paper making, spinning and weaving. Co-education is allowed in almost all the Basic schools of the district. The progress of the Basic schools is shown in the following table :—

Years.	Kinds of schools.	Number of schools.	Number of pupils.		Total.
			Boys.	Girls.	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1948-49 ..	Basic School ..	4	814	63	877
1951-52 ..	Post Basic .	1	64	..	64
	Basic School ..	43	6,488	393	6,881
1953-54 ..	Post Basic ..	1	60	..	60
	Senior Basic ..	43	5,731	420	6,151

Years.		Kinds of schools.		Number of schools.	Number of pupils.		Total.
					Boys.	Girls.	
1		2		3	4	5	6
1954-55	..	Post Basic	..	1	96	2	98
		Senior Basic	..	42	6,449	425	6,874
		Junior Basic	..	55	3,319	249	3,568
1955-56	..	Post Basic	..	1	158	2	160
		Senior Basic	..	42	7,138	501	7,639
		Junior Basic	..	90	5,314	397	5,711
1956-57	..	Post Basic	..	1	181	2	183
		Senior Basic	..	42	7,526	503	8,029
		Junior Basic	..	155	7,290	714	8,004

Apart from general Basic schools there are three Basic Training Schools—one Senior and two Junior in the district and they are included in the professional schools. From the statistics it is evident that the Basic schools in course of eight years have made exemplary progress, as the number of institutions has increased from 4 to 198. There had been rapid increase in the number of institutions every year, but the number of scholars has not kept pace with the number of institutions proportionately. There is no doubt that there had been phenomenal increase in the number of scholars, e.g., from 877 to 16,216 but the average number of students in each school fell from 219 in 1948-49 to 80 in 1956-57.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS.

Regarding middle schools the old District Gazetteer published in 1930 mentions that there were 16 Middle English schools with 2,120 pupils and 28 Middle Vernacular schools with 4,671 pupils in 1928-29.

The progress of middle schools from 1941-42 onwards is given in the following table :—

Years.		Number of institutions.			Number of pupils.		
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1		2	3	4	5	6	7
1941-42	..	103	3	106	10,805	173	10,978
1951-52	..	117	4	121	20,396	240	20,636
1952-53	..	125	5	130	18,191	250	18,441
1953-54	..	136	4	140	19.796	498	20,294
1954-55	..	137	4	141	20,675	571	21,246
1955-56	..	145	5	150	22,700	682	23,472
1956-57	..	160	6	166	24,779	829	25,608

There had been steady increase in the number of institutions and scholars since 1941-42 except in the years 1952-53 and 1953-54 when the statistics of scholars marked a slight decrease from the preceding year of 1951-52. But this decrease was noticed so far as the boy scholars were concerned, and not with the girl scholars who had shown constant increase year by year.

HIGH SCHOOLS.

Regarding high schools the old District Gazetteer (1930) mentions that " There are nine high schools. The Zila School at Chapra is managed by Government. The aided schools are the Saran Academy and Bisheshwar Seminary at Chapra; the V. M. High School at Siwan; the V. M. High School at Gopalganj; and the schools at Amnaur and Goreakothi. The unaided schools are the Foley Rajput High School at Chapra and the Eden High School maintained by the Hathwa Raj. Before the institution of the Patna University the schools at Chapra used to receive many pupils from the United Provinces who found the Matriculation standard of the Calcutta University more congenial than that of Allahabad; the influx has, however, been checked by the somewhat higher standard imposed by Patna ".

The progress of high schools from 1941-42 onwards is given below :—

Year.		Number of institutions.			Number of pupils.		
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
1		2	3	4	5	6	7
1941-42	..	30	.	30	7,372	1	7,373
1951-52	..	59	1	60	18,970	182	19,152
1952-53	..	66	1	67	16,177	191	16,368
1953-54	..	70	1	71	18,696	353	19,049
1954-55	..	70	1	71	21,809	349	22,158
1955-56	..	73	1	74	24,542	410	24,952
1956-57	.	77	1	78	27,913	540	28,453

From the figures above it will be seen that the number of scholars and institutions both have steadily been increasing except in the year 1952-53 in which though the institutions had increased the number of scholars decreased by 2,784 from the preceding year 1951-52. The slump during this period is witnessed in the scholars of almost all kinds of institutions. The Chapra Girls' School was provincialised on the 10th March 1949.

So far as the total figures of the students are concerned, it is seen that the increase during the period 1952-53 to 1956-57 was

pronounced as in course of four years the number of scholars shot up by 75 per cent. Moreover, it is interesting to note that proportionately the number of scholars per school had also increased. In 1941-42 the number of scholars per school was about 246 as against 364 in 1956-57.

The Zila School, Chapra, is the oldest high school in the district and was started in 1854. The school has the honour of claiming Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Indian Republic as its product. In his auto-biography the President has devoted pages to the influence of the School and its Headmaster, Khirod Chandra Roy Chowdhury on him.

Collegiate Education.

There are six colleges in the district.

Rajendra College, Chapra.—The college was started as an intermediate college in August, 1938, and was raised to the Degree standard in Arts in 1939 and was affiliated to the old Patna University. In 1940, it was affiliated up to the intermediate standard in Commerce and in 1942, the affiliation raised to the Degree standard. The college started teaching in Science up to the intermediate standard from 1944 and in 1949 it was affiliated up to the Bachelor standard. Thus, at present it imparts education up to the Degree standard in the faculties of Arts, Commerce and Science. Now the college has started Honours in Hindi and Economics in Arts and Chemistry in Science. With the vivisection of the old Patna University in 1952 the college stands affiliated to the Bihar University.

In the session of 1938-39 when the college was started there were only 97 students on roll. There were 526 pupils in 1941-42 as against 1,500 in 1952-53. At present (1956-57) there are 2,244 students on roll.

The college is situated in Banwarinagar and is housed in a massive building constructed by Shah Banwari Lal in 1869.* It is generally known as the *Sarai* building for it was previously used by the pilgrims of *Harihar Kshetra* during Sonepur fair. There is a massive tower in the east with a large clock and bears the year 1870. There is a park in front of it and further east is a big tank with *pucca ghats* all round. The tank was also constructed by the late Banwari Shah and had cost Rs. 90,000 at that time. The *sarai* compound is under the trusteeship of the Chapra Municipality and the college has taken on long-term lease almost on the permanent basis. It has an area of 20 *bighas* 12 *kathas* and 11 *dhurs* and is surrounded on

* It is interesting to observe that the munificence of late Shah Banwari Lal and his two wives was appreciated by the British Government by the award of titles. Banwari Lal was given the title of Rai Bahadur and used to be addressed as Shah Banwari Lal. It was abnormal at that time to confer titles to women. But in appreciation of the magnanimous liberalities of the wives of Shah Banwari Lal the Governor-General conferred the title of "*Jawadoon nissa—Saloodia Khandan*" the meaning of which is "the most liberal of the females and most praised of her family".

all sides by a compound wall which was constructed with the efforts of its students and teachers.

The college has a good library and rented hostels which are not sufficient for the accommodation of the students. The National Cadet Corps of the college came into being from 1949. The total number of cadets so far enrolled and trained has been 1,200. It is an independent organisation and 154 cadets receive training every year. There are five officers in the unit.

D. A. V. College, Siwan.—The college is situated at Siwan. It was started in July, 1941, and was affiliated up to the intermediate standard in Arts and Commerce to the old Patna University. The college started teaching in the Bachelor of Arts from the session 1950-51. It now stands affiliated to the Bihar University. During the session 1941-42 it had only 27 students as against 298 in the session 1953-54. The total strength of students during the session 1956-57 was 670. The college also started an agricultural farm from the session 1952-53 for training of students.

The college is housed in its own building. It has also acquired an area of 10 acres and 7 decimals land for its proper development. The college has a good library.

Jagdam College, Chapra.—The college was started in the session 1954-55 and commenced teaching both in Arts and Science up to the intermediate standard. It stands affiliated to the Bihar University up to the intermediate standard in Arts and Science from 1955 and Bachelor standard in Arts from 1956. Thus at present the college is imparting education up to the Degree standard in Arts and intermediate standard in Science. The strength of students during the session 1954-55 was 43 as against 303 in 1956-57. The college has a library containing about 3,000 books. The college hostel has an accommodation of 60 students. The National Cadet Corps of the college came into being from 1956 and trains 102 cadets every year.

Jai Prakash Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Chapra.—The college is the second academy in the Tirhut Division for the higher education of girls. It was started from the session 1955-56 in Arts up to the intermediate standard and stands affiliated up to the intermediate standard of the Bihar University. From the session 1956-57 it also started teaching in the Bachelor of Arts. The strength of scholars was 25 in 1955-56 as against 50 in 1956-57. The Sadar Municipality has leased out an extensive plot of land with two blocks of building on the basis of nominal rent. The college has received a sum of Rs. 15,000 for recurring expenditure from the State Government in 1956 and G. D. Birla also donated a sum of Rs. 5,000 in the same year.

Two colleges were simultaneously started in 1956 in the Gopalganj subdivision—one at the subdivisional headquarters at Gopalganj and the other at Hathwa.

Gopalganj College, Gopalganj.—The Gopalganj College was started in the session 1956-57 both in Arts and Science up to the Intermediate standard. Apart from the compulsory subjects it teaches Principal Hindi, Logic, Civics, Urdu, Sanskrit and Mathematics in the Arts subjects and Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics in the Science subjects. The college has also started teaching in the Bachelor of Arts from the session 1958-59. The college is housed in the building of V. M. High School, Gopalganj, and it has also a rented private building for hostel.

Gopeshwar College, Hathwa.—The college was started in July, 1956, both in Arts and Science up to the Intermediate standard. It is fortunate to have the munificence of the present Hathwa Raja. It stands affiliated to the Bihar University from 1957. The strength of students in 1956-57 was 73 as against 124 in 1957-58.

Oriental Schools and Colleges.

Teachings in the oriental institutions are based on the age-old indigenous pattern and basic Sanskrit, Urdu, Arabic and Persian are taught in such schools. In 1956-57 there were three *madarsas* with 243 boy scholars and 12 girl scholars and 37 Sanskrit *tols* with 1,076 boy scholars and 61 girl scholars in the district. There were also 205 *maktabs* and 44 Sanskrit primary schools but to all intents and purposes they are now included in the primary schools.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the enlightened men of the district realised the importance of higher studies of Sanskrit education even at a time when there was no college in the district for the prosecution of higher studies. As such a Sanskrit College known as Bharteshwari Marwari College was established in Chapra in 1920 and for its proper maintenance a trust property was attached to it under the supervision of a managing committee. It teaches *ayurveda, sahitya, veda, vyakaran* and *jyotish* up to the *Acharyya* standard. In 1954 the institution was converted into the Government Bharteshwari Marwari High School with its entire assets and liabilities. Since then the teachings in the *Prathama* and *Madhyama* were upgraded and reoriented with the inclusion of all the modern subjects. The teachings of *Sastri* and *Acharyya* course and even of *Ayurveda* from *Madhyama* are imparted in the same building during the morning hours. The supervision of the college is still under a managing committee while the Government took the entire responsibility for the maintenance of the high school. The college is getting an annual grant from the Government. There were 25 students on rolls in the college in 1956-57 while in the high school 250 as against 50 in 1953-54.

Professional and Technical Schools.

The industrial school or Mahila Shilpa Vidyalaya and the commercial school for typing and shorthand are located at Chapra.

Besides these schools, industrial sections have been started in the D. A. V. Middle School, Siwan, Sahuli Middle School and Masrakh Middle School; the first two give training in carpentry and the latter in weaving. Before the introduction of basic education there were six elementary *Guru* Training Schools at Siwan, Gopalganj, Ferusa, Balua, Siswan and Kalyanpur. The *Guru* Training Schools of Ferusa and Kalyanpur were abolished earlier while with the introduction of Basic education the schools of Balua and Siswan were closed. The remaining two at Siwan and Gopalganj were converted into the Junior Basic Training Schools. There is also a Senior Basic Training School at Bangra.

There is an agricultural school attached with the Central Farm at Sapaya which gives training in agriculture. After the completion of training for one year 50 per cent of the successful candidates are sent to the Extension Training Centres either at Muzaffarpur or Patna and after six months' further training they are appointed as the Village Level Worker in the National Extension Service Block. At Marhowrah there is a polytechnique school which was started in 1955-56. The progress of the professional and technical schools is given in the following table :—

	Number of Scholars.				Basic Training school.					
Years.	Industrial.		Commercial.		(Both Senior and Junior).		Agriculture.		Polytechnique	
	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.	Boys.	Girls.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1952-53 ..	..	140	20	..	138	19	..	..	.	..
1953-54 ..	.	167	25	..	144	8	.	.	..	..
1954-55 ..	..	160	126	.	206	..	..	..	..	..
1955-56 ..	..	170	394	..	300	2	119	..	56	..
1956-57 ..	.	176	389	..	276	9	54	..	109	..

SOCIAL EDUCATION.

Social Education Scheme was started in the district, after the formation of the first Congress Ministry in 1937. In 1938, Mass Literacy Campaign was launched and a Mass Literacy Board was formed under the Chairmanship of Dr. Syed Mahmud, the then Minister of Education and Development, Bihar. The scheme for social education provides not only vocational training but also provides for instruction in a variety of useful subjects and activities.

Unfortunately there had been a great set back in the scheme after the resignation of the Congress Ministry in 1939. After independence, the scheme was again put into operation in the district. For due progress in Social Education Scheme, the Government have started a large number of Social Education Centres and each centre is given an aid of Rs. 21 per mensem. In Social Education Centres both adult males and females get education. Each Centre has a daily literacy class. Frequently social and cultural gatherings take place on different occasions. Religious songs, readings from religious books, newspapers and magazines, practical demonstration on agricultural activities, village welfare work form part of the work of a Social Education Centre. Most of these Centres are housed in school buildings or in the office of Gram Panchayats or Co-operative Societies.

The progress of Social Education Centres of both males and females from 1952-53 to 1956-57 is given below :—

Years.	Institutions.		Scholars.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5
1952-53	101	2	2,217	41
1953-54	133	5	2,591	80
1954-55	149	2	5,888	356
1955-56	240	9	7,564	607
1956-57	482	26	13,897	770

There has been progressive increase in both the number of institutions and scholars, both in males and females except in 1954-55 when female institutions decreased from 5 to 2.

Cultural and Literary Societies.

At one time Urdu and Persian were studied by the educated and intelligentsia of the district. It is understood that there were quite a few seats of Muslim culture and libraries. Now the Hindus study Hindi more. The district has produced several literary men of repute including Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India. His brother Shri Mahendra Prasad started a dramatic club and took great interest in spreading cultural activities. Some of the leading landlords had sponsored libraries and literary societies. Late Mahamahopadhay Pandit Ramawatar Sharma was an educationist and an oriental scholar. There had been other Hindi writer poets. There have been contributions to Urdu poetry by some of the Urdu writers of this district.

There are five periodicals in 1948 in Hindi all published from Chapra. Their circulation is limited and confined within the district.

Libraries.—There are altogether 311 libraries in the district out of which 288 have been sanctioned in 1957-58 for grant-in-aid. Considering the vast population of the district, the number of library seems to be quite inadequate. The District Central Library which was formerly known as Shreenandan Library deserves more than a passing reference. This library was established in 1935 and was converted into District Central Library in 1952-53. The library receives a recurring grant of a sum of Rs. 3,000 annually from the Government and Rs. 150 from the Sadar Municipality. The average number of readers in 1956-57 was 21. The total number of books in this library is 2,538 out of which 1,967 are in Hindi and 571 in English. It cannot be said that the Library movement has been a success so far. The average number of daily readers in the Central District Library being 21, it can safely be said that the educated men of Chapra and particularly the young men have yet to realise the importance of libraries. The village libraries are, however, more popular. The libraries do not organise cultural meets or lecture-discussions. It is very unfortunate that the libraries in this district as also in most other districts should only be existing and are not yet centres of culture, inspirations and contributions. But a start has been made.

CHAPTER XV.

MEDICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES.

SURVEY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL FACILITIES IN EARLY TIMES.

A proper survey of public health and medical facilities in early times is not possible because of paucity of source-materials. It could, however, be guessed that the district lived entirely in the villages and the incidence of diseases probably was not as high as at present because the living conditions were easier and there was not much strain on one's nerves. Good food-stuff was available in plenty and at a cheap cost. But it could also be presumed that many of the deaths were due to imperfect diagnosis of the diseases and want of proper medicines. The village *Vaidyas* and *Hakims* were good but up to a certain point. Regarding surgical operations they had their difficulties. There has been no very well reputed *Vaidya* or *Hakim* in this district as far as local enquiries went. The second line of doctors was supplied by the *Jarhas, Hajams* and families that kept traditional medicines. The *Jarhas* were a class of people mostly Mohammedans who had ointments that were taken to be the wonderful specifics for boils, gangrenes and other diseases. Some of the *Jarha* families are still to be seen in the towns and in the villages. The formula of the specifics they use are guarded secret but they are made of easily available herbs. Some of the village barbers were quite good in the surgical skill, as many people still think. They, however, did not use any antiseptic and their present clientele come mostly from the villages. Some families distributed particular specific for diseases like asthma, gout, etc., and the formula of these specifics were also close secret. The village *Chamains* were the traditional midwives and their services were invariably taken at the time of confinement in every well-to-do family. There is also a certain amount of belief in *Jharphunk* (exorcism) in cases of hysteria, snake-bite, etc. The *forte* of the *Ojhas* seems to consist in their persistent efforts to keep the affected person in a tension. The *Ojhas* would burn chillies and make the patient breathe that smoke, give him slaps or flog the patient with a cane and probably the idea is not to let him sleep. Fortunately most of the snakes are non-poisonous.

In the early days of British administration we find that an attempt was made to introduce the allopathic system of medicine and modern surgery as it then existed in the urban areas. Hospitals and dispensaries were opened in the urban areas first and then these institutions were spread in the interior. With the introduction of Local Self-Government, maintenance of public health became a major duty of the District Board and a number of dispensaries came to be opened in the interior of the district. For a long time the District

Magistrate continued to be at the head of the medical administration of the district although there was the Civil Surgeon for looking after the technical side. There was a lot of antipathy on the part of the people to take to the modern system of allopathic treatment and it was difficult to push in an injection or to make an operation decades before. But now the craze is to get an injection for a quicker cure. The British administrators also gave a certain amount of encouragement to the other systems of medical treatments, namely, *Kaviraji*, *Unani* and Homeopathic. Epidemics were fewer in the past but unfortunately the incidence of casualty if a virulent epidemic broke out was severe owing to the fact it took a longer time to reach the medicines to the country-side. Epidemics of plague were, however, rather frequent till a few decades back.

Vital Statistics.

The accuracy of the vital statistics depends on the village Chaukidar whose duty is to report the births and deaths to the local police-stations and monthly returns are submitted from the thanas to the Civil Surgeon of the district. The diagnosis of the cause of the death by the Chaukidar naturally cannot be relied on; if there is any doubt, it is generally attributed to fever. When the Chaukidar is himself attacked by any disease of serious nature the reporting probably stops altogether for an indefinite time. It is expected that with the spread of Gram Panchayats in the district, this inaccuracy will disappear. A second source of the vital statistics is the census records. Census is taken once in ten years. There are also occasional health surveys in particular areas or a survey of a particular disease condition. The reports of such health surveys also give some data for the vital statistics. But there have not been any such surveys.

The population of the district had increased steadily from the first census in 1872 till 1891 and then decreased for twenty years. From 1911 to 1921 there was a small increase, due chiefly to the fact that outbreaks of plague were losing their virulence.

Since 1912 the birth-rate has always exceeded the death-rate except in three years, namely, in 1918 when the death-rate was nearly double the normal owing to the influenza epidemic, in 1919 when the diminished vitality of the preceding year was shown in the abnormally low birth-rate and in 1921 when the difference was slight and was due mainly to an unusually high death-rate from fever after the flood of that year. Since 1912 the highest death-rate was 62.2 per mille in 1918 and the lowest 20.7 in 1923. The highest birth-rate was 47.6 in 1912 and the lowest 33.3 in 1919. The averages for the period are 32 deaths and 39.3 births per mille.

The population has steadily increased from 23,40,222 in 1921 to 2,48,673 in 1931, 28,60,537 in 1941 and to 31,55,144 in 1951. From 1928 to 1951 the birth-rate per mille of the population has throughout exceeded the death-rate per mille. The highest birth-rate was recorded in 1932 and 1936, viz., 38.05 and 38.45 per mille, respectively.

The lowest birth-rate was 20.53 per mille in 1948. The highest death-rate occurred in 1931 at 31.25 per mille while the lowest death-rate was 12.23 per mille in 1950 and 13.26 per mille in 1951. The average birth-rate per mille from 1930 to 1951 was 32.99 and the average death-rate per mille for the same period was 21.23 per mille. The statistics of the vital statistics from 1941 onward are given below :—

Year.	Births (Registered).			Deaths (Registered).		
	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1941	94,308	48,740	45,568	53,176	28,632	24,544
1942	82,786	41,975	40,811	44,965	24,364	20,601
1943	69,441	36,844	32,597	42,750	23,169	19,581
1944	63,425	33,425	30,000	60,770	33,631	27,139
1945	67,815	35,442	32,373	64,562	35,839	28,723
1946	70,470	37,286	33,184	56,465	30,332	26,133
1947	54,073	28,674	25,399	52,561	27,030	25,531
1948	47,073	24,823	22,250	38,137	20,626	17,511
1949	52,030	26,412	25,618	30,318	15,518	14,800
1950	49,950	26,138	23,812	29,157	15,848	13,309
1951	Not available					
1952	60,762	Not available		40,315	Not available	
1953	70,459	Ditto		39,667	Ditto.	
1954	74,545	Ditto		37,063	Ditto.	
1955	77,122	Ditto		35,167	Ditto.	
1956	77,839	Ditto		33,213	Ditto.	

In 1941—1950 decade specially for seven years, public health in Saran appears to have been worse than at any time during the preceding ten or fifteen years. Cholera broke out in epidemic form in 1943, 1944 and 1945 and the average annual mortality from cholera during 1941—1945 was 3,153 as compared with only 590 in the previous decade. In 1944-45 fever also took a great toll of lives. Cholera occurred again in 1947 and 1948 and there was also increase in the incidence of plague which took an epidemic form in 1946 and 1947. The incidence of fever increased in 1952 and 1953 when mortality due to it came to 28,495 and 27,972, respectively. But in spite of the epidemics, the birth-rate throughout exceeded the

death-rate. The average birth-rate in the last quinquennium was 23.24 and the death-rate 11.75 per mille.

DISEASES.

Fever.

The highest mortality as mentioned in the last District Gazetteer (1930) is even now caused by fever. But this is more due to the ignorance of the village Chaukidars who are able to diagnose only well-known diseases like cholera and small-pox and many other diseases are indiscriminately classed under the general head of fever. Malarial fevers are not very common; cases do occur chiefly after the rains but it is not possible to say what proportion of the deaths could be attributed to other types of fever or due to malaria. Breeding places for malaria carrying anopheles mosquitoes are unfortunately common but many of them are temporary and dry up during the cold and hot weather. August and November are the months which see the greatest number of deaths from fever. The majority of cases which come under medical observation are of benign tertian character which yield readily to quinine and its various preparations. The incidence of black-fever or kala-azar is also not very great in this district. Cases of malaria and kala-azar are more found in the Gopalganj subdivision than the other parts of the district and are due to the proximity of Champaran where the incidence of these diseases is much higher. The number of deaths attributed to fever in 1918, the year of the influenza epidemic, was 68,676 or 29.9 per mille of the population· the death rate was also abnormally high in 1921 after the floods, the number of deaths being 42,217 and the rate 18 per mille. In 1923, the number of deaths from fever was 23,603. The highest mortality due to fever next to 1918 was recorded in 1931, the number being 42.480 or 17.09 of the total population. The mortality due to fever recorded a decline from 1949 onward, the death-rate being 7.5 per mille. The average death-rate between the year 1946 to 1949 was 9.6 per mille. The mortality due to fever of the recent years is given in the following statistics :—

Year.					Deaths.
1952	..	..	..	..	28,495
1953	..	..	..	..	27,972
1954	..	..	..	..	26,410
1955	..	..	..	..	24,834

From the above statistics it is apparent that fever is taking a great toll of lives every year; though the mortality had shown a downward tendency every year. The mortality due to fever was 8.9 per mille in 1952 as against 7.6 per mille in 1955 and the average death-rate between 1952 to 1955 was 8.4 per mille.

Cholera.

The epidemic of cholera was common in the past and is still not completely stamped out. Stray cases of cholera is reported every year. The cases usually occur after April and a flare-up is noticed near about October coinciding with the *mela* season of the district. Sometimes the diseases are imported from the neighbouring districts and the inter-State districts during the time of Sonepur fair when a large number of pilgrims from different parts of India and Asia visit the fair. Sonepur fair used to be an important source of infection but recently the epidemic has lost its virulence due to the improved sanitation and cleanliness, construction of bore-hole latrines in the *mela* area. The total number of deaths in this district due to cholera was on average 1,059.91 from 1930 to 1940. The highest mortality from cholera is recorded in 1930 and 1931, the total deaths being 5,277 and 2,017, respectively. The diseases broke out in virulent form in 1944 and 1945 when it took the toll of 5,879 and 5,553 lives, respectively, in the district. The incidence of cholera had fallen steadily since then and in 1951 as the figure recorded being 222. The average death-rate from 1946 to 1950 was 3.3 per mille. In 1952 the disease broke out in epidemic form and took 488 valuable souls in the district. The lowest figure is recorded in 1955 as only 7 deaths occurred due to cholera. In 1953 the figure of death was recorded 50 as against 153 in 1954. The death figure again shot up in 1955 when 259 lives were lost due to cholera.

The preventive measures are undertaken by the District Health Officer with the help of Assistant Health Officer, Health Inspectors and Sanitary Inspectors in the shape of disinfection of wells and intensive anti-cholera inoculation. But in spite of the sanitary measures undertaken by the Public Health Department the disease is not likely to be stamped out till many insanitary domestic habits of the people are radically changed.

Small-pox.

Cases of small-pox make their appearance every year but the virulence has not been as high as in cholera and fever except in exceptional years. Between the period 1930 to 1940 the total number of deaths due to small-pox was on average 1,013 whereas it was 904.6 between the period 1941 to 1951. The years of high mortality were 1932, 1933, 1936, 1940, 1950 and 1951. The highest mortality of 3,856 was recorded in 1933. The next epidemic to assume the devastating magnitude was in 1951 when the mortality went up to 3,122. The average death-rate between the year 1946 to 1950 was .18 per mille as against .62 per mille for the period 1930 to 1934. The disease again broke out in epidemic form in 1952 when 308 lives perished due to small-pox. The average death-rate between 1953 to 1955 was 36.

Vaccination forms the only strongest measure against small-pox. The people are now getting convinced of the efficiency of vaccination.

Primary inoculation is compulsory in the municipal areas and the Epidemic Disease Act is now enforced with greater rigidity. The mass vaccination and re-vaccination is given during the epidemics.

Plague.

Bubonic plague first appeared in the district, in a village in the south-east corner, in January, 1899. Owing to the prompt measures taken, the outbreak was confined to this one village and was stamped out by the end of March; but in September it reappeared in a neighbouring village and gradually spread westwards towards Chapra which became infected in March, 1900. It was epidemic in the district during the census of 1901 and in the succeeding next ten years it accounted for no less than 1,66,000 deaths. In 1914 there were 20,000 deaths; there had been no very serious outbreak since 1918 when the deaths numbered 10,227 or 4.4 per mille of the population the highest figure since then being 3,658 in 1922. Between 1930 and 1940 the incidence of plague had decreased, the lowest being 370 and the highest being 1,447. The mortality reached its highest peak in 1946 and 1947 when the recorded deaths for the district were 6,639 and 12,073. The worst suffered centres were Kateya, Mirganj and Bhorey in the Gopalganj subdivision; Basantpur, Siwan, Maharajganj, Guthni, Mairwa in the Siwan subdivision and Baniapur in the Sadar subdivision. A temporary 100-bedded hospital was started at Sepaya in 1947 to accord relief to the large number of patients. A cyno squad was posted in the district for combating the disease in 1943.

The epidemic of plague, owing to sustained effort of the Public Health Department and the consciousness of the people to resort to inoculation, has practically been eradicated from the district. A few stray cases had been recorded in 1952 and in 1954 which took the toll of 17 and 4 lives, respectively, in the district.

Other Diseases.

Apart from the principal diseases mentioned above there are diseases which also occur in the district and take a heavy toll of lives every year. The incidence of the treated diseases as recorded in the hospitals and dispensaries is given below :—

Name of diseases.	1948.	1949.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Kala-azar ..	15,017	14,419	12,250	12,296	12,115	11,986	10,038	10,989	10,925
Malaria ..	40,114	33,433	33,664	28,787	27,162	29,850	23,396	20,207	14,861
Filaria ..	1,479	1,622	2,458	2,763	1,862	2,012	2,125	2,465	2,921
Hookworm ..	5,912	7,396	8,252	9,697	8,105	5,982	7,863	7,515	7,118
Leprosy ..	1,659	2,908	2,212	2,056	2,112	2,553	2,322	1,833	1,942
Tuberculosis ..	2,524	2,624	6,796	5,411	6,850	2,453	3,398	2,579	2,637
Goitre ..	8,156	7,951	7,352	5,929	5,122	4,589	5,011	4,669	4,535

Goitre.—Goitre is more prevalent in the Gopalganj subdivision. The number of goitre recorded in 1935 was 18,646 and in 1942 it fell down to 10,627 and from 1948 it had showed downward tendency.

Tuberculosis.—The poor economic condition, hard manual labour in the struggle for existence, greater mental and physical strain owing to malnutrition are mainly responsible for the spread of the tuberculosis in the district. The figures of tuberculosis shown in the table are fluctuating and had appreciably been controlled.

Filaria.—The number of filarial cases seems to have apparently increased but this may be also due to the greater consciousness of the medical staff for holding filaria responsible for cases of scrotal tumour, hydrocele and unexplained painful swelling and lymphangitis.

Leprosy.—If the report of the censuses of 1921 and 1931 are any indication the incidence of leprosy is not big in the Saran district. At the census of 1921 only 497 lepers were recorded in Saran, mostly in the towns. The census of 1931 recorded 421 out of which 370 were males and 51 females. The infirmity figures have not been enumerated in the censuses of 1941 and 1951. But from the above-mentioned figures of the out-door patients it is apparent that the incidence of leprosy is greater than mentioned in the censuses of 1921 and 1941. Neither the census figures nor the figures of hospital and dispensaries lead us near the truth as it is difficult to diagnose the disease in its early stages and there is a strong tendency to conceal admitted cases. This bare truth is admitted by the Census Superintendent, Mr. Lacey, who has mentioned in the *Census of India*, 1931 (Vol. VII, Part I Report), published in 1933, that "The actual number of persons returned as lepers in Bihar and Orissa at the present census was 22,794 which is equivalent to 54 persons in every 1,00,000. In 1921 the number was 12,269 or 32 in every 1,00,000. It so happens that in the former occasion the proportion of lepers in this province was exactly the same as in the whole of India, and Sir Leonard Rogers expressed the opinion at about that time that in actual fact there were at least five times as many lepers in India as were shown in the census returns, while Dr. E. Muir went still further and proposed to multiply the census figures by ten. The views of these eminent authorities on leprosy have since received striking confirmation from a number of surveys carried out in different parts of the country by doctors who had received special training in the diagnosis of the disease". He further mentions that "Among individual districts Saran is the only one to show a decline and the fact that the returns of deaf-mutism and blindness from this district are also much lower than before, while the increase in the case of insanity is very slight, leads one to suspect that the record of infirmities in Saran on the present occasion was not particularly successful". It has, however, to be mentioned that there has not been a proper scientific survey either on leprosy or a study of insanity, ailments of thyroid, idiocy or moron condition.

From stray local enquiries it appears that the incidence of leprosy is greater in Jamo, Gopalganj and the Sadar subdivisions than other parts of the district. There is no leper home or clinic in this district and the cases are treated in out-doors of the hospitals and dispensaries. A leper subsidiary centre has been opened in Siwan under the charge of a trained Medical Officer where leprosy patients are treated as out-door patients. A voluntary social institution known as the Kusth Sevasram, Mairwa (Brindawan) has been started in 1953. This institution has received donations from the State Government.

Eye-diseases.—An average of 1,896 cases attend the dispensaries for the treatment of trachoma which is responsible for loss of eyesight in a large number of cases. The old *District Gazetteer, Saran,* published in 1930, mentions that the blindness is more prevalent in Saran than any other districts of North Bihar except Champaran. The figures according to the census of 1921 were 96 males per 1,00,000 and 91 females per 1,00,000 as against 82 males per 1,00,000 and 80 females per 1,00,000 in 1931. The blindness figure is not mentioned in the census of 1951. From the records available in the hospitals and dispensaries it appears that the number of cases seeking advice in hospitals and dispensaries for treatment of cataract range from 887 to 1,989 in a year. Over 2,000 cases were operated in the various hospitals of the district from 1943 to 1951. Recently private Blind Relief Camps had been organised during the winter season in the various parts of the district and also at Patna for cataract operations. The figures for eye-diseases treated in the hospitals and the dispensaries of the district were as follows :—

17,821 for 1952, 20,903 for 1953, 21,232 for 1954, 26,312 for 1955 and 21,039 for 1956.

HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES.

Organisation.—The Civil Surgeon is the administrative head of the District Medical Department and in his work he is assisted by several Assistant Civil Surgeons. He is in over-all charge of the work and administration of the State-managed hospitals and dispensaries. He also supervises the hospitals and dispensaries maintained by the District Board, Municipalities and others. The Civil Surgeon along with the District Medical Officer is responsible for the public health activities of the district. During the time of the epidemics he is responsible for checking the spread of the disease and to afford medical facilities to sufferers. The Civil Surgeon is also the chief authority in the district to enforce the provision of the drug control measures. He issues licenses to druggists and chemists and has also power to cancel them if he is not satisfied with their operations. He is expected to be more vigilant regarding sole distribution of sulfa drugs and antibiotics. As he has now been put in charge of public health section as well his designation is now Senior Executive Medical Officer.

There are altogether 31 hospitals and dispensaries in the district including the State-managed police hospital at Chapra. The description of some of the important hospitals and dispensaries is given below.

Chapra Sadar Hospital.

It was established in July, 1856, and provides an accommodation of 166 beds out of which 97 are for males and 69 for females. It was founded by public subscription and was further largely aided by a munificent donation from the late Babu Banwari Lal Sahu, a banker of the town. The hospital was provincialised in 1955. There is a separate tuberculosis ward which provides six beds for males and four beds for females. Besides there is a ward for the treatment of the cholera patients. The number of beds is not specified and accommodation is given to all cases of cholera. An anti-tuberculosis clinic was attached to the hospital in 1938 under the management of Anti-tuberculosis Association, Bihar. The clinic is looked after by an honorary doctor who attends twice a week. The clinic opens three days in a week and examines and treats all chest cases. The clinic has got arrangements for giving A. P. and for ordinary clinic examinations. A B. C. G. Vaccination Team visited the district and inoculated the students of the local colleges and schools in 1952.

The Sadar Hospital is equipped with an X-ray apparatus. The hospital is popular in the locality and remains overcrowded throughout the year. A large number of patients are operated every year for hernia, tumors, cataract, extractions, cæsacrean, overian cyst, laperotomic and other important operations. The strength of the medical staff in the Sadar Hospital is five including the Civil Surgeon and a Lady Assistant Civil Surgeon. The number of Nurses is two, Compounders three and Dressers three. The nursing staff is inadequate.

At Chapra there is a Family Planning Centre and Maternity and Child Welfare Centre; the former being attached with the Sadar Hospital under the supervision of a Lady Visitor while the latter is running as a private institution and the Civil Surgeon is the Secretary of it. The table below will give the number of treated in-door and out-door patients of the Sadar Hospital :—

Year.	In-door.	Out-door.
1952	1,599	268
1953	1,183	691
1954	1,507	1,290
1955	6,728	31,087

Subdivisional Hospital, Siwan.

The Siwan Subdivisional Hospital was opened in July, 1872, and was provincialised in 1955. The number of medical staff in 1958 was 3 including a Lady Sub-Assistant Civil Surgeon, two Compounders and two Dressers. The total number of beds in the hospital is 44 out of which 25 are for males and 19 for females. The figures of in-door and out-door treated patients are given below :—

Year.	In-door.	Out-door.
1952	1,200	19,736
1953	1,343	21,905
1954	1,222	21,240
1955	1,350	21,602
1956	1,790	21,270

Raj Hospital, Hathua

The Hathua Hospital was constructed by the Maharani of Hathua in December, 1872. On account of financial stringency the Raj found it difficult to maintain it properly and consequently the hospital was maintained by the Revenue Department and it has been provincialised in 1955. The hospital gained much popularity since its inception owing to efficient staff and surgical apparatus. The hospital has four medical staff including one Lady Sub-Assistant Civil Surgeon. There are four Nurses, three Compounders and two Dressers. The total strength of beds of the hospital is 100 out of which 70 are for males and 30 for females. The figures of in-door and out-door patients of the hospital are given below :—

Year.	In-door.	Out-door.
1952	2,012	31,614
1953	1,661	29,627
1954	1,526	25,525
1955	1,578	22,244
1956	1,801	20,917

Subdivisional Hospital, Gopalganj.

The Gopalganj Hospital was established in April, 1873, and was provincialised in 1955. The strength of medical staff of the hospital is three including one Lady Sub-Assistant Surgeon, two Compounders and two Dressers. The total number of beds in the hospital is 52

with 44 for males and 8 for females. The figures for in-door and out-door patients are given below :—

Year.	In-door.	Out-door.
1952	860	20,513
1953	937	21,225
1954	1,092	24,663
1955	1,603	29,936
1956	1,531	33,926

Besides the four upper-most hospitals of the district excluding the police hospital at Chapra, the importance of Jamo and Marhowrah dispensaries comes next, the former being 8-bedded in-door dispensary while the latter had also previously the same number but since 1957 those dieted beds were converted into six emergency beds.

Out-door dispensaries.—The rest 24 dispensaries of the district only give out-door medical aid and they are situated at Bhorey, Chainpur, Khujwa, Mashrakh, Manjhi, Guthni, Baniapur, Dighwara, Kuchaikot, Maharajganj, Nayagaon, Reotith, Ekma, Barauli, Basantpur, Darauli, Kateya, Mairwa, Parsa, Sonepur, Goldenganj, Barharia, Revelganj and Garkha. The dispensaries of Darauli, Mairwa, Baniapur and Sonepur have been recently provincialised and all have provision of six emergency beds except Darauli, Manjhi, Garkha and Barharia, which has got four emergency beds each.

Besides, the North-Eastern Railway maintains a well-equipped dispensary at Sonepur for the treatment of the railway staff.

Other Institutions.

Out of 10 Blocks of the district Mobile Health Centres have been opened at Darauli, Kuchaikot, Baniapur and Andar in 1955 each with three sub-centres. In each Health Centre an Assistant Surgeon with three Health Workers, three trained *Dais* has been posted for giving medical facilities and sanitary advice to the villagers. Maternity and Child Welfare Centres at Chapra, Gopalganj, Siwan and Hathua have been opened. Each is staffed by a qualified trained midwife. There is a proposal to appoint a Lady Health Visitor in each centre. The midwife attends to children and the expectant mothers, distributes milk to children and the expectant mothers and conducts labour cases on getting information from the patients. The centres are visited by the Lady Doctor who gives anti-natal service at the centre in a week. A leprosy subsidiary centre is opened at Siwan for the treatment of lepers. A voluntary social institution known as the Kustha Sevasram, Mairwa, was opened in 1953. The Family Planning Centre, Chapra, is attached to the Sadar Hospital

TRAINING OF COMPOUNDERS AND DAIS.

A course of training is imparted to apprentice compounders and dressers in the Sadar Hospitals, Siwan and Gopalganj and Hathua.

Training in elementary midwifery is given to *Dais* in Chapra and Siwan Hospitals. The *Dais* are granted stipend by the Government during the apprenticeship. They are in short supply along with nurses.

INDIGENOUS DISPENSARIES.

Apart from 31 allopathic dispensaries there are 13 *ayurvedic*, 1 *unani* and 1 homeopathic dispensaries in the district. The indigenous method of cure is still prevalent in the rural areas. The costly allopathic medicines and its complicated diagnosis stages are beyond the reach of the people due to their poverty and for the dearth of the qualified doctors in the rural areas Many unqualified Homeopaths, *Vaidyas* and *Hakims* and quacks are practising in the rural areas at the cost of the ignorance of the people No doubt they do some good to the public but not unoften more harm is perpetrated by their ignorance; especially when with their own treatment they use injections and other allopathic toxic medicines the actions of which they do not fully know. The abovementioned *ayurvedic, unani* and homeopathic 15 dispensaries are under the direct control of the District Board and have been staffed by qualified physicians.

Normal pregnancies and labour cases are usually conducted by *chamains* or untrained midwives in the rural areas. The number of Maternity and Child Welfare Centres are a few and far between and have not yet been extended to the average group of villages. Some indigenous herbs, root and plants such as *tulsi* leaves, *chirchiri, bariara, gurich, pudina, bachas, regani* and *trifala* are widely used in the rural areas for the cure of the various diseases. Birth control clinics and its scientific methods are practically absent throughout the district.

ACTIVITY OF THE INDIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

In the year 1938, nine Doctors of Saran enrolled themselves as the members of the Patna Medical Association. Later on when the Bihar Branch of the Indian Medical Association was started at Patna a separate unit was started at Chapra on the 2nd April 1938 named as the Chapra Branch. Now the strength or the number of the Chapra Branch of the Indian Association increased to 62. Not all the allopathic doctors of the district are members of this Association.

The members of the Chapra Branch of the Indian Medical Association help at times of emergencies like outbreak of cholera, small-pox and plague. The doctors of this district organised a relief team in 1942 in response to an appeal by the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Bihar, to cope in time of emergency in the municipal area against epidemics. They also participated in delivering first-aid

lectures to the students and the employees whenever needed. The Chapra Branch of the Medical Association organise and observe its "health week" as an annual feature. During the week they arrange a series of popular lectures on the different subjects concerning with health, combined with cinema shows on the various aspects of the subject of health.

The number of registered qualified allopathic doctors in the district is 119, out of which 80 are in Sadar, 20 in Siwan and 19 in Gopalganj subdivisions.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

The District Medical Officer, for the purpose of Public Health Organisation, is the administrative head of the district. In each subdivision there is an Assistant Health Officer. Besides, there are 27 Health Inspectors, 105 Vaccinators and 54 Disinfectors for the maintenance of rural sanitation. There are altogether 10 Sanitary Inspectors to supervise the work of the Health Inspectors, Vaccinators and Disinfectors. The District Medical Officer is now under the Senior Executive Medical Officer-*cum*-Civil Surgeon.

SANITATION.

Rural Sanitation.

Rural sanitation is under the charge of the District Board from its very inception, but no effective measures have hitherto been taken for the improvement of it. It should be borne in mind that sanitation presuppose civic sense and wholesome habits of the inhabitants and so long they lack it the village sanitation will never improve. Rural sanitation suffers from several defects. Arrangement for latrines hardly exists in the rural areas and it is still considered a mere waste to have latrines for males. Consequently, they are constrained to have resort to promiscuous desecration generally by the side of village roads, ponds and rivers. *Katcha*-built latrines known as *sandas* are usually built for the women-folk. Secondly, houses are generally mud-built without proper arrangement for ventilation and drainage. Dirty water is allowed to flow out and accumulate in little pools which make the place muddy and filthy. During rains these pools serve as the breeding ditch for mosquitoes and flies. The household refuges are thrown improperly and are removed occasionally. Filtered and tap water has not as yet made much headway and consequently the people are constrained to drink and use the unwholesome water of tanks and *katcha* wells. Some improvements, no doubt, have been made in this direction where Block centres are functioning, but their number is a few and far between. Eighty-two *pucca* wells have up to 1957 been constructed by the Harijan Welfare Department for drinking purposes. It is expected that by the end of Second Five-Year Plan the whole district will be covered by the Gram Panchayats and by this agency, there would be appreciable change in the rural outlook and sanitation.

The activities of the Public Health Department to inculcate the villagers the value of sanitation and measures for prevention of the epidemics are appreciable. Efforts have been made to improve the village sanitation by constructing soak pits and composts and make aware the villagers of the value of civic sense through health propaganda which is being carried out through magic lantern slides and by health talks. Preventive measures carried out by the Public Health Department can be seen in the following statistics given below :—

	1953.	1954.	1955.	1956.	1957.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Primary Vaccination ..	72,811	97,219	97,674	1,11,645	99,997
Re-vaccination	1,86,382	2,69,548	5,96,500	8,95,266	5,56,494
Plague inoculation	3,816	978	6,423	3,120	98
Anti-cholera inoculation ..	4,05,428	1,05,522	2,09,088	3,80,299	2,73,866
Well disinfection.. ..	2,53,998	2,40,684	2,33,164	3,03,094	1,93,855

Sanitary Measures taken during Sonepur Fair.

Sonepur fair is the biggest cattle fair in Asia and is also considered by the Hindus a place of exceptional holiness and the *Ganga-snan* or ceremonial bathing in the Ganga unusually efficacious. But the great attraction of the place is the fair. It lasts for about a fortnight, but is at its height for two days before and two days after the bathing in the Ganga on the day of the *Kartik Purnamasi*. Several lakhs of people visit the *mela*. Apart from administrative control to check untoward incidents, the sanitary measures to prevent the spread of epidemics in the *mela* area and the neighbouring villages become all the more important. For proper control, the *mela* area is usually divided into several sections and daily the sanitation work is discussed by the staff of the Public Health Department. The Additional Director of Public Health, Tirhut Division, keeps vigilant eye upon the sanitation of the *mela* area. The Engineering Department of the District Board usually work in close co-operation with the Public Health Department.

Epidemic Control.—It would be dangerous to rule out the probability of the outbreak of the epidemics outright on an occasion where millions come. Due arrangements are made beforehand by the Public and Medical Departments along with the railway medical staff to meet any eventuality. All the wells of the contiguous villages from Palezaghat in the south and Parsa in the north-west are thoroughly disinfected before and after the commencement of the fair. The Government waterworks at Sonepur is also chlorinated. The dirty and waste water of the rivers Mahi in the south and Mehura in the north is regularly disinfected with poisonous germicidal drugs to destroy the virus of epidemics.

Conservancy.—Before the commencement of the *mela* a number of temporary latrines and urinals are constructed in the different parts of the *mela* area for public use. The number of latrines and urinals provided in the last three years was as follows :—

	1954.	1955.	1956.
Bore-hole latrines ..	1,000	1,023	1,200
Urinals	150	119	150

Considering the huge congregation of pilgrims the number of latrines cannot be said to be adequate. But instead of resolving the problem it is all the more rendered difficult by promiscuous desecration of the pilgrims. Three squads of scavengers are especially deputed for burying the night-soil scattered on the banks of the rivers Gandak, Mahi and Mehura. The roads of the *mela* area are regularly swept and washed.

Water-supply.—The Government waterworks at Sonepur is the chief source of water-supply for drinking purposes in the *mela* area. Besides it, a number of temporary taps and tube-wells are constructed to meet the water-supply of the *mela.* Besides, there are also 64 District Board and 111 private wells which serve the need of the *mela* population.

Food Control.—Measures are taken by the health staff to prevent the supply of adulterated food in the different restaurants and hotels. The suspected foods are sent for chemical analysis and the culprits are punished in the court of law. A slaughterhouse is maintained by the Government where goats are thoroughly examined by the Veterinary Doctor before slaughter. The slaughterhouse is kept neat and clean and usually 6 A.M. to 9 P.M. is fixed for slaughtering time.

Dispensaries.—In addition to permanent dispensary at Sonepur, three temporary dispensaries are usually maintained—one at *Mina Bazar,* other at *Nakhas* and the third at *Bailhatta.* Necessary anti-cholera drugs and B. P. are supplied in each dispensary. Steps are being taken to inoculate the pilgrims before entering into the *mela* area.

A great number of lepers are seen begging the charity of the passer-by in the outskirts of the *mela* area. A leper-shed is usually constructed in the south of the river Mahi as a measure against the spread of the loathsome disease leprosy, but in this the authorities are not successful since the lepers are seen frequently begging in the *mela* area.

The Public Health propaganda and exhibition of films concerning the health matters and sanitation are demonstrated with the help of lantern slides in the *mela* area by the staff of the Public Health Department.

Besides Sonepur there are a number of places in the district where fairs are held, which attract a large number of local people. The following table gives some particulars about these fairs :—

Name of fair.	Location.	Period of fair.	Attendance (approximate).
Dumarsan ..	Marhowrah ..	*Ramnawami* (20 days)	30,000
Baniapur ..	Baniapur ..	*Aghan Panchami* (15 days)	60,000
Silhauri ..	Marhowrah ..	*Shivratri* (7 *days*) ..	30,000
Maheundar ..	Siswan .	*Shivratri* (7 days) ..	30,000
Thawe ..	Goplaganj ..	*Ramnawami* (20 days) ..	40,000
Hathua ..	Mirganj ..	*Dashara* (25 days) ..	30,000

In respect of fairs where pilgrims exceed 10,000 sanitary arrangements are made by the Public Health Department with the help of local medical staff.

Urban Sanitation.

The sanitation arrangements of the towns are slightly different from the rural sanitation. There is regular system of conservancy and the removal of night-soil and refuse of the towns. But considering the areas and population of the towns, the number of persons employed for the sanitation work seems to be quite inadequate. The Chapra Municipality has an area of 7½ square miles consisting of 64,309 souls according to the census of 1951 and this municipality has only employed 383 scavengers for disposal of night-soil and refuse of the town. Similar is the case with the other municipalities of the district. Like the villages, the towns also suffer from crowded and badly aligned block of houses, intersected by narrow lanes and consequently the incidence of epidemics is greater than the rural areas The Municipal Boards of Chapra, Siwan and Revelganj and the Notified Area Committee of Gopalganj look after the sanitary arrangements in their respective areas.

Drainage.—In none of the towns of the district there is proper drainage system. The number of septic tanks for the disposal of night-soil is practically nil. The drains of the towns are *katcha* and remain silted throughout the year for want of proper desilting arrangements and consequently the household refuse water is allowed to accumulate on the narrow roads of the town. The condition of the roads become all the more awful in the rainy season.

Water-supply.—The chief source of water-supply even in the municipal area of the towns are wells. The sub-soil water due to the absence of rocks is available in abundance. Scarcity of water is

seldom felt in the district. Apart from wells hand-pumps are becoming popular. The Public Health Engineering Department has hitherto sunk 528 hand-pumps, and tube-wells in the rural areas of the district for drinking purposes.

Pipe water scheme in Chapra town has been introduced since January, 1956. There are two water towers, the capacity of each is one lakh gallon. The pipe line has been laid along the roads and the streets, the length of which is about 17 miles. The town is fed with 1.800 taps. Considering the teeming population of the town the system of water-supply seems to be inadequate. Besides, there are 1,130 deep and shallow wells, 1,037 tube-wells, 176 hydrants and the number of house connection 725. Tap water is also available in Sonepur. It cannot, however, be said that there are proper drainage, conservancy or water-supply arrangements in any of the towns.

CHAPTER XVI.

OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES.

Labour Welfare.

The labourers may be divided into two sections, agricultural and non-agricultural. The condition of the agricultural labourers has been indicated in some of the other Chapters. It has been mentioned that there is no statutory rule to enforce their rights and obligations. The Agricultural Minimum Wages Act has not yet been enforced in the district. The agricultural labourers are mobile and could sell themselves at the highest market whether within or without their own villages. A non-agricultural labourer may be described as a factory hand when working in the sugar factory and he may occasionally hire himself as an agricultural labourer. It is difficult to come to any precise estimate of the number of non-agricultural labourers. The matter of the welfare of industrial labour has been covered in the Chapter on Industries.

Prohibition.

Prohibition has not yet been enforced in the district. It has been mentioned elsewhere that as an experimental measure in some parts of the district prohibition had been enforced during the first Congress Ministry The experiment was not successful. But the State Government have gradually been increasing the price of the intoxicants to lessen the number of the consumers. From 1st April 1959 sale of opium for oral consumption has been prohibited. Opium will now be available only on medical certificates.

Advancement of Backward Classes and Tribes.

Twenty-two castes or groups of Saran district were notified as Scheduled Castes under the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950. Similarly 28 castes or groups of Scheduled Tribes were notified as Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950. Thirty-eight castes or groups of Saran district were notified as Backward Classes. These castes or groups under the three categories are found all over the district. According to the Census Table of 1951 the Scheduled Tribes were enumerated only in urban area. A large number of Scheduled Tribes found in the rural areas was left out. Their number according to 1951 census was as follows :—

		Male.	Female.
(1) Scheduled Castes	.. ..	1,54,206	1,77,817
(2) Scheduled Tribes	.. ..	221	231
(3) Backward Classes	.. ..	1,72,683	1,74,948
Total	..	3,27,110	3,52,996

The total population of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes was 6,80,106 according to 1951 census. This comes roughly to 22 per cent of the total population. There is no doubt that this 22 per cent of the total population of Saran district is extremely backward from social and economic point of view.

The responsibility of social backwardness mainly lies with the caste-men who have placed a certain amount of taboo and untouchability on most of these classes. They had been relegated to the " untouchable class " in spite of the fact that they fill a very important role in the economy of the district. There is, unfortunately, a certain amount of taboo among the different classes of the Harijans as well. Inter-dining and inter-marriage among the Harijans (a name given to these classes by Mahatma M. K. Gandhi) themselves had persisted. A co-ordinated attempt to remove the disability and the backwardness of the Harijans is being made in very recent times. When Mahatma Gandhi visited the neighbouring district of Champaran in 1917 in connection with the oppression of the indigo *raiyats* he felt that the social backwardness of a vast population could only act as an impediment on the progress of the society as a whole. Mahatma Gandhi started a number of schools in the interior of Champaran district where teachers and the students had to be their own scavangers. This example of Gandhiji had created a certain amount of stir in the neighbouring district of Saran. The *Kabirpanthis* and some of the members of the *Arya Samaj* had early felt the necessity of working among the Harijans and to help them in getting over their backwardness. Once converted into Christianity there was no division. A comprehensive Harijan movement started by Gandhiji in the later years of the Non-Co-operation Movement had some effect in this district. Many of the local Congressmen gave up untouchability as a creed and this helped the move to a very great extent. Spread of education and democratic ideas, reservation of seats in the legislature and special provisions for education have upgraded the economic standard of the Harijans to some extent. But there is much that has to be done yet.

After the attainment of Independence the State Government acted to the popular wishes when a District Harijan Welfare Officer was appointed in 1948 with his headquarters at Chapra under the administrative control of the District Magistrate. The District Harijan Welfare Officer has mainly to see that the money sanctioned by the Government was properly utilised in the welfare of the Harijans. The Bihar Harijans (Removal of Social Disabilities) Act, 1949, has been enforced in the district from 1951. The Harijan Temple Entry Act, 1955, is another attempt to remove the social disabilities of the Harijans by taking statutory steps. Untouchability is now a crime since the passing of the Untouchability (Offence) Act, 1955. The Bihar Privileged Persons Homestead Tenancy Act has been passed and no person could be evicted from his homestead. The State Government have also issued a circular that new Khasmahal

chaur lands wherever they are available should be settled with the Harijans.

But mere statutory obligations have seldom raised a community that is socially backward. There must be voluntary workers and efforts from the Harijans themselves to change the outlook. A number of non-officials had devoted themselves to this work. Thakkar Bappa's scheme of social amelioration of such classes was sought to be implemented in this district. Dr. Shib Das Sur has been working in a voluntary social service centre at Chirand. A branch of the Harijan Sewak Sangh has been opened at Chapra and works in close co-operation with the District Harijan Welfare Officer. The District Harijan Sewak Sangh has been functioning for the last eighteen years with the object of looking after the educational and economic condition of the Harijans. Bharat Sevak Samaj has a branch and workers in this district. But only a fringe of the problem has been touched.

The Government have undertaken a ten-year scheme beginning from 1953 for the housing of the destitute Harijans who have no lands and also for those who have lands but no means to construct houses. So far (1958) only eight houses have been built for the Harijans in different parts of the district. Not much work has yet been done for implementing housing for the landless and the homeless Harijans.

Monetary assistance is given to the poor agriculturists of these classes. The skilled persons are given loans to develop their cottage industries. A number of wells have been sunk in the Harijan villages where there were no facilities for drinking water.

State help is being given to the boys and girls of these classes for receiving education. Monthly stipends, book-grants and occasional grants for general purposes are given to them. Hostels are being opened for such students and they are also given hostel grants for stay elsewhere.

There are six Harijan *Kalyan* hostels running in this district owing to the efforts of the Welfare Department. They are situated one at Chapra, two at Siwan, one at Gopalganj, one at Hussainganj and one at Bhore.

There are special schools for the Harijans. There are twenty-six Harijan Lower Primary Schools in the district run with the aid of the Welfare Department. There are more than one thousand boys and girls reading in these institutions. Non-Harijan children are also admitted as students. There is one Junior Basic Residential School at Hathua managed by this department.

State Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board.

Saran district has always contributed a large number of men to the police and the army. During the Great War of 1914—1918,

Saran contributed a large number of Combatant and non-Combatant soldiers in Mule, Labour Corps and Infantries, known as Russell's Infantries. The total strength was estimated to be near about 5,050. Many of the Combatants had served in France, Flanders, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Egypt. The War ended in 1918 and the Combatants and Non-Combatants were demobilised between 1919 and 1921.

Later questions arose as to the care of the families of those who were dead or incapacitated. Their maintenance was a problem. Pensions were granted according to Army Orders but they were not sufficient for all requirements.

The ex-Commissioned and non-Commissioned Officers under the guidance of Sardar Bahadur Subedar Sheo Balak Singh, formed an association in 1922 to look into the interest of their demobilised fellowmen. Sardar Bahadur Subedar Sheobalak Singh, became its President and Rasaldar S. K. Prem Singh its Secretary with other 21 ex-servicemen as members. The association held its meeting at intervals and expenses of running the association were met entirely from subscription raised among the members. Sir Henry Wheeler, Governor, became its patron and granted an assistance of Rs. 500 towards its upkeep. On 7th July 1924 the association under instruction from Government came to have the name of the District Soldiers' Board, Saran, with the District Officer of Saran, as its first *ex-officio* President. The association besides watching and furthering the interest of their own class, helped the Government when Non-Co-operation and Civil Disobedience Movement were launched.

In 1933 the Indian Soldiers' Board began to meet its establishment charge by getting a recurring grant of Rs. 300 yearly. In 1942 the Indian Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board increased the grant to Rs. 700 and in the middle of 1943 the I. S. S. A. Board and Provincial Sailors', Soldiers and Airmen's Board took over the control of the District Soldiers' Board and began to meet its full establishment charges. In 1943, due to heavy recruitment in all the three wings, the Soldiers' Board of Saran was named District Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Board and became an unit of the I. S. S. A. Board and P. S. S. A. Board.

The Board is now located in its own building which provides accommodation to its office and a rest house for the ex-soldiers. The Rest House was built through the contribution of the general public in memory of those who fell in 1939—1945 and in Kashmir campaign.

The Board endeavours to promote and maintain a feeling of good-will between the civilian and military classes and to represent to the civil authorities in all matters of importance to the ex-military families. Information regarding educational concessions and employment facilities for ex-military personnel and their children are circulated. Legal advice is procured in case of necessity and

generally the interests of the family members of the demobilised soldiers are looked into. The Board will also be useful for recruitment. For a district like Saran which has a large number of families contributing men to the military personnel in the last 150 years, a Board of this type has its special value.

Recruitments.

The people of Saran district form one of the fighting sections of Hindustan. They have in former times furnished a rich field of recruitment to the Indian Army and rendered valuable service to Government on several occasions. The recruitment in 1914—1918 was 3,000 Combatants and 2,050 non-Combatants. In 1939—1945, the number of recruits was 13,169 in different corps. The percentage of recruits in all the corps were as follows :—

	Per cent.
Army Medical Corps	19.5
Army Supply Corps	34.5
Electrical Mechanical Engineering Corps ..	4.5
Infantries and General Services Corps ..	11.5
Labours and General Services Corps ..	23
Signal Corps	3.5
Army Ordinance Corps	3.5

Now even in peace time the recruitment is 10 to 11 persons per month, 90 per cent goes to the Infantries while 10 per cent to the Signals and other Corps. This district gave the second largest recruits in the Kashmir Campaign in 1951 amongst all the other districts of the State of Bihar.

Resettlement after Demobilisation.

Eighteen per cent has gone to agriculture, 70 per cent absorbed in services (in Government and private firms). 5 per cent in their own business and 7 per cent are pensioners. The number of pensioners are 1,095 (gents 865, ladies 128, male children 55 and female children 47).

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS.

The public trusts and endowments made by the Hindus in Saran district are governed along with similar trusts and endowments in other districts by the Bihar Hindu Religious Trust Act I of 1950. The State Government have appointed a Special Officer with its headquarters at Patna to administer the Act.

The Act imposes a duty on the trustees of a public trust to which the Act has been applied to make an application for the registration of the trust with specific particulars. The trustee should mention, in the application the approximate value of movable and immovable property belonging to the trust, the average annual income and the expenditure. No registration is. however, essential for trusts

owned privately. From the registered trusts the Board realises a fee at the rate of 5 per cent on the income of the trust property.

Some of the more important trusts in Saran district are as follows :—

Ratnapura Math.—This *math* is situated at Ratnapura mahalla of Chapra town. The famous temple of Dharamnathji and a Sanskrit College are maintained by the trust. The trust has about 250 *bighas* of land and a good income from the offerings at the temple.

Mansar Kumna Math.—This *math* is situated near Koposamhauta Railway Station. This trust maintains a high school, *Dharamsalas* at Varanasi (Benaras) and Prayag (Allahabad). The *math* has about 3,600 bighas of land.

Dhanauti Saheji Math.—This math is considered to be the *Guru gaddi* seat of preceptor of the *Kabirpanthis*, followers of the creed propounded by Kabir, a saint. The trust has a property of about 1,100 *bighas* of land.

Sawari Math.—This is situated near Koposamhauta and maintains a high school. It has about 200 *bighas* of land.

Bhakhaband Math.—It is situated near Maharajganj. It maintains an upper primary school. The landed property of the *math* is about 400 *bighas* of land.

Patehri Trust.—Patehri trust lands are in Maharajganj police-station. A high school, a middle school and a dispensary are maintained from the proceeds of the trust.

CHAPTER XVII.

PUBLIC LIFE AND VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SERVICE ORGANISATIONS.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1952.

After the attainment of independence the First General Election was held in 1952. This election was a unique feature in the history of the representation of the district. It was for the first time that the election was held on the basis of adult franchise. It was a new experiment in the country. Though we have no record as to what percentage of population received the franchise in Saran by the Act of 1935 but it was certain that franchise in the district was not more than 10 per cent which is the All-India figure.* The other unique feature of the election of 1952 was that it provided equal opportunity for women and the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Backward Classes.

In the General Election of 1952, 15,59,567 persons or about 50 per cent of the population of Saran district were eligible for exercising their right of franchise. There were 25 constituencies for the Bihar *Vidhan Sabha* and 4 for the *Lok Sabha*. The *Lok Sabha* constituencies were the (1) Saran North, (2) Saran Central, (3) Saran East, and (4) Saran South. For the purpose of the *Lok Sabha* a few constituencies of Gopalganj subdivision were joined in the Saran-*cum*-Champaran Constituency. There were 25 constituencies for the Member of the Legislative Assembly out of which 3 were double-member constituencies, thus forming a total of 28 seats in the district. They were as follows :—

Subdivision.	Name of the constituency.	Total number of electorates.
Sadar ..	Ekma	54,151
	Manjhi	52,559
	Masrakh North	45,750
	Masrakh South	38,983
	Marhaura	63,142
	Baniapur . .	60,307
	Chapra Town	51,945
	Chapra Mofussil-*cum*-Garkha (double-member constituency).	98,082
	Parsa	41,448
	Dighwara	44,267
	Sonepur	40,475

* *An Advanced History of India* by R. C. Mazumdar, H. C. Roy Chaudhury and K. K. Dutta, page 925.

Subdivision.	Name of the constituency.	Total number of electorates.
Siwan ..	Siwan (double-member constituency).	1,31,633
	Barharia	49,799
	Mairwa	65,129
	Darauli	72,707
	Raghunathpur	62,785
	Maharajganj	51,173
	Basantpur West	52,258
	Basantpur East	46,816
Gopalganj ..	Kuchaikot	50,827
	Gopalganj	59,941
	Barauli	68,539
	Baikunthpur	47,602
	Kateya-*cum*-Bhorey (double-member constituency).	1,16,545
	Mirganj	72,704

The political parties which contested the General Election of 1952 were the (1) Indian National Congress, (2) Socialist Party, (3) Kisan Mazdur Praja Party, (4) Jan Sangh, and (5) Communist Party.

So far as the Parliamentary Constituencies are concerned there was a triangular fight among the three major political parties, viz., the Indian National Congress, the Socialist and the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party. The Socialist Party contested all the four Parliamentary seats while the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party only two seats. The Independents contested the three Parliamentary seats. Out of the total of 13,12,658 votes only 4,55,580 were polled in all the four constituencies of the district. Out of it the Indian National Congress secured 2,54,818 or about 55 per cent of the total votes polled, Socialist Party 1,03,756 or 22 per cent, Kisan Mazdur Praja Party 41,067 and the Independents 55,939. On the whole the Indian National Congress fared better in the Parliamentary election of the district as it polled 2,54,818 as against 2,00,762 of the combined votes of the Socialist Party, Kisan Mazdur Praja Party and the Independents.

For the 28 Assembly seats there were 133 candidates out of which 28 were the nominees of the Indian National Congress, 27 of the Socialist Party, 17 of the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party, 6 of the Jan Sangh, 2 of the Communist Party, 3 of the Ram Rajya Parishad, 1 of the Revolutionary Socialist Party and 49 were Independents. As stated above the total strength of the electorates in Saran was 15,39,567 out of which 6,20,966 or about 40 per cent votes were cast. Out of the 28 seats, 27 were bagged by the Indian National Congress and only 1 by the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party.

The total votes polled by each party are as follows :—

Name of the Party.	Total votes polled.
Indian National Congress	3,14,352
Socialist Party	1,25,632
Kisan Mazdur Praja Party	43,131
Communist Party	5,573
Ram Rajya Parishad	4,860
Jan Sangh	4,861
Independents	1,20,894
Revolutionary Socialist Party	1,663
Total	6,20,966

Thus the Indian National Congress secured 3,14,352 votes as against 3,06,614 by the other parties opposed to the Congress taken together. From the figures it is apparent that the communal parties like Jan Sangh and the Ram Rajya Parishad and the Communist Party had practically no hold in Saran. In the post-election report it is mentioned that in strength and organisation the Congress Party had great hold in the district. Being the oldest and most popular as a single party in the country it had its workers in every thana and village. The other parties were new and had not as many workers and volunteers as the Congress Party The Independents were in a better position than the other parties. Being local men of influence they were expected to win at many places but a high incidence of rivalry among themselves as is obvious from the huge number of contestants marred their prospects.

It is remarkable that in this election women took keen interest and in some cases they polled about 60 per cent of their votes. The cases of false personation and malpractices were very few.

GENERAL ELECTION, 1957.

The Second General Election was held in 1957 on the basis of the electoral rolls made in 1952 subject to modifications made therein in course of five years that elapsed since then. The total number of electors in 1957 in Saran was 16,19,891 as against 15,59,567 in 1952. The number of the Parliamentary seats remained 4 as was in 1952 but there had been decrease in the Assembly seats which came down to 26 as against 28 in 1952. In this election also some constituencies of Saran for Parliamentary purposes were combined with the Kesaria Parliamentary Constituency and for which the Returning Officer was the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division.

The name of the 4 Parliamentary Constituencies with total number of electors and the actual votes polled are given below :—

Name of the Constituencies.			Total Electors.	Total votes polled.
(1) Maharajganj	..	..	3,85,849	1,47,420
(2) Chapra	..	..	3,89,668	1,66,322
(3) Siwan	..	..	3,78,240	1,38,756
(4) Gopalganj	..	..	3,68,473	1,34,227
Total	..	..	15,22,230	5,86,725

There were 12 candidates for the 4 Parliamentary seats: (1) the Indian National Congress—4, (2) Praja Socialist Party—4, (3) Communist—1, (4) Jan Sangh—1 and (5) Independents—2. In this election the Praja Socialist Party captured one seat while three went to the Indian National Congress. The following will show the total votes secured by members of the different parties :—

Name of the parties.				Number of votes secured.
Congress	..	..	..	2,94,431
Praja Socialist	..	..	..	1,91,011
Communist	..	..	..	15,629
Jan Sangh	.	..	..	43,443
Indepentents	..	..	..	42,211

Thus the total votes polled by the Indian National Congress was greater than the opposite parties as the combined votes of the opposite parties were 2,92,294 as against 2,94,431 by the Congress.

For the 26 Assembly seats there were 91 candidates—26 nominees of the Indian National Congress, 20 of the Praja Socalist Party, 8 of the Janta Party, 4 of the Communist Party, 3 of the Jan Sangh, and 30 were Independents. The total votes for the Assembly was 16,19,891 out of which 7,14,286 were polled or about 44 per cent of the electors exercised their right of franchise. The total votes secured by the parties are as follows :—

Name of the parties.				Number of votes secured.
Congress	..	..	..	3,26,491
Praja Socialist	..	..	..	1,89,088
Socialist	..	..	..	727
Janata	..	..	..	49,440
Communist	..	..	..	19,256
Jan Sangh	..	..	..	9,948
Independents	..	..	..	1,19,336

From the above table it is apparent that as a single party the Indian National Congress fared much better than any other party in the district. But the combined votes of the opposite parties were 3,87,795 as against 3,26,491 secured by the Congress. This was partially due to the votes polled by the Independents who did not belong to any particular party.

Out of the 26 Assembly seats, 17 were bagged by the Indian National Congress, 6 by the Praja Socialist Party, 1 by the Janata Party and 2 were won by the Independents. As a party the Socialist Party practically disappeared from the scene as it contested only one seat which also it lost and secured only 727 votes. The Praja Socialist Party appears to have made a great headway in this election in comparison to the last General Election of 1952. It secured one Parliamentary seat and six Assembly seats whereas in 1952 it had secured only one seat in the Assembly. The Communist Party and the Jan Sangh did not make any appreciable mark. The newly-formed Janata Party captured one Assembly seat.

From the abovementioned figures it is clear that the people are slowly realising the value of party system in the democratic form of Government. They also indicate that a party machinery to fight the elections has a better advantage than Independents working on their own. The Independents, however, were able to capture votes more due to their local popularity and influence. Only two Independents were returned, one was a retired District and Sessions Judge and the other was a dissident Congressman. It is mentioned in the post-election report that the cases of personation and malpractices were appreciably small. The women had taken great interest in the election It is significant that two ladies were successful in getting Assembly seats.

NEWSPAPERS.

No daily newspapers are published in the district. In Saran only six Hindi periodicals are published. They are (1) *Narad,* (2) *Adarsa Kisan,* (3) *Adhikar,* (4) *Sarswati Sandesha,* (5) *Prahari,* and (6) *Naya Bihar.* Excepting the last the other papers are published from Chapra.

Narad.—It is a weekly periodical and its circulation figure is about 2,000. The majority of the columns are covered by the sale notices of the Civil Court and certificate cases. Only a few pages are covered by local news.

Adarsa Kisan.—It is a weekly periodical. It is a sort of farmer's bulletin and deals with modern methods of cultivation. It has a circulation of about 1,600 copies.

Adhikar.—A weekly periodical which publishes only local news. Its circulation is about 1,200.

Sarswati Sandesha.—It is a literary weekly which publishes short stories and literary essays. It has a circulation of about 1,000 copies.

Prahari.—It is a weekly periodical publishing local news and has a circulation of about 300 copies.

Naya Bihar.—A fortnightly periodical published from Goreakothi dealing with news items of Bihar. It has a circulation of 3,300 copies.

Apart from the periodicals there is a Hindi monthly magazine called *Agradut* published from Chapra by the Regions Beyond Mission, Chapra. The other two local missions also co-ordinate. Its circulation is not large since it has been recently founded (April, 1959). It is a religious paper for the propagation of the gospel.

The daily papers which are published outside the district and are in common circulation are the *Indian Nation* and *Searchlight*, two English dailies of Patna. The circulation figures of the two dailies are near about 1,000 copies each. The other daily English newspapers in circulation are the *Statesman* (Calcutta), *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Calcutta), *Leader* (Allahabad), *The Times of India* (Delhi) and the *Hindustan Standard* (Calcutta). Their circulation figures are said to be within 100 copies each. So far English magazines are concerned the *Careers and Courses* (Delhi), *Modern Review* (Calcutta) are popular among the students and the college common room. Their circulation figures will come about to 100 each. The *Blitz* (Bombay) has a circulation of about 100 copies.

Among the Hindi daily newspapers the *Aryavarta* of Patna, *Aj* of Benaras, *Pradip* of Patna, *Vishwamitra* of Patna have a circulation of near about 300 to 1,000 copies in Saran. Among the weekly Hindi periodicals the *Dharmayug* (Bombay) and the *Navashakti* of Patna have a circulation of about 300 to 500 copies. The other weekly Hindi periodicals are the *Hindustan* (Delhi) and the *Bhudanyagna*. Their circulation figures will come within 100 copies. Among the monthly Hindi magazines the *Sahitya Sandesha* (Agra) has a circulation of about 100 copies in the colleges, schools and among the students. The other Hindi monthly magazines are the *Navneet* (Bombay) and the *Gnanodaya* (Calcutta) with a circulation of about 50 copies.

Among the Urdu daily journals the *Seyasate-e-jadid* of Kanpur and the *Sadayam* of Patna have circulation of near about 500 to 600 copies A Bengali daily journal the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta has a circulation of about 150 copies. The other Bengali daily paper is *Yugantar* with a circulation of less than 100 copies.

The habit of reading newspapers has not taken roots excepting among the educated urban population. Even if on the average it be taken that one paper is read by three persons the number of newspaper readers will not be very large. The newspapers in the libraries are read on the average by 50 to 100 persons every day.

Voluntary Social Service Organisations.

There are frequent references in the old English Correspondence Volumes kept in the District Archives, Chapra, of the munificence of Shri Banwari Lal Shah of Chapra and his two wives. From Foreign Political Consultations, October, 1869, nos. 178—183 in the National Archives, New Delhi, it appears that Shah Banwari Lal received the title of Rai Bahadur as an acknowledgment of his liberality and he was also conferred with a suitable *khillut*. It is mentioned in the Government papers " that the crowning act of this man's generosity was the construction of a *sarai*, and the Bengal Government now report that two of his wives have each offered to give Rs. 10,000 towards the construction of a house and gate in connection with the *sarai* ".

The Collector of Saran requested that these ladies might be allowed to style themselves "*Syed-o-Zanan-o-Suttodia Khandan*" as a prefix to their names. The Bengal Government, however, recommended the title of "*Janwadoon-nissa-suttodia Khandan*". Although such titles were unusual for ladies the titles were considered suitable and appropriate. The Governor-General agreed that the titles and the *Khilluts* be conferred. The meaning of title was ' the most liberal of the females and most praised of her family ".

The present Rajendra College named after Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, is housed in the old *sarai* of Shah Banwari Lal. It is mentioned in the old records that the Sadar Hospital owes much to the munificence of Shah Banwari Lal. The next important medical institution in the district is the Victoria Hospital at Chapra, constructed by the Maharani of Hathua in memory of Queen Victoria. The Hathua Raj family also made liberal grant to the Patna General Hospital where there is a ward known as the Hathua Ward. The present high school and the college at Hathua owe much to the Hathua family. Describing the progress of education in Saran Mr. P. N. Gupta in his Revisional Settlement Operations Report for 1915—1921 had given lavish praise on the Hathua family when he had mentioned that no other zamindar in the district is known to have noticeably associated himself with the advancement of education. " The zamindars should take the lead in improving the education of the tenantry who are in many ways dependent on them. It is a matter for regret that they have done little or nothing to justify their position."

It would not be out of place to mention here that the value of the social institutions has been emphasised by religious creeds. The *Arya Samaj* is an institution which was founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati. The *Arya Samaj* Mandir was established in Siwan in 1898 and later its followers spread throughout the district. The activities of *Arya Samaj* are more concentrated at Siwan town than in the other parts of the district. In the field of education its activities range from the maintenance of schools from the stage of lower

primary to degree college. All their educational institutions have the prefix of D. A. V. (Dayananda Anglo Vedic). There is also a *Balvikash Bhawan* where teaching is imparted on the *gurukul* pattern. In such institutions much emphasis is laid on the physical and moral education of the children. At Gopalganj there are both D. A. V. High and Middle schools. The Chapra branch of the *Arya Samaj* maintains a D. A. V. Middle School and a *Kanyapathsala*. There is also a *gurukul* school which imparts education up to *sastri* standard in Sanskrit and up to matriculation on the general line.

The Siwan branch of the (*Arya Samaj*) maintains a *Bidawa Sanrakshan Samiti* and a *Anath Sanrakshan Samiti* for the protection of the widows and the orphans. The *Samaj* makes arrangement for the marriage of the rescued widows or if possible they sent back to their homes. When such arrangement fails the rescued widows are sent to Patna or Muzaffarpur *mahila ashram* for receiving training in handicrafts to make them self-supporting. The orphans are generally sent to Danapur where there is an orphanage. At Siwan there is also a *Dalita Udhara Pathsala* for the welfare of the boys of the poorer class which is now maintained by the Siwan Municipality.

Theosophical Society.—The Theosophical Society was founded by Madame H. R. Blavatsky and Col. H. S. Olcott in the United States in 1875. They came to India in 1879 and in 1886 established their headquarters in Adyar, a suburb of Madras. The real success of the movement in India is, however, due to Mrs. Annie Besant, who joined the Society in 1889 and settled in India in 1893 at the age of forty-six.

The Theosophical Society from the very start allied itself to the Hindu revival movement. The Theosophical Society, with its many branches all over India, has proved an important factor in social and religious reform. It is not possible to give a detailed account of the activities and achievements of the Society as here we have to confine ourselves so far as the Chapra Theosophical Society is concerned.

The Chapra Lodge of the Theosophical Society is a branch of the Bihar Federation of the Theosophical Society with its headquarters at Patna The Bihar Federation itself is a branch of the Theosophical Society with its headquarters at Varanasi. The International headquarters of the Theosophical Society is at Adyar (Madras).

The Chapra Lodge was established sometime during the first decade of the present century. The aim of the Society is to preach universal brotherhood and the comparative study of all the religions. For this purpose the Chapra branch of the Society holds public meetings and arranges for lectures on allied subjects. The lodge celebrates *jayanties* (anniversaries) of the founders of great religions such as Lord Mahabir's birthday, Buddha *jayanti* and the prophet's day, etc. The society maintains a Montessori school for the children through the assistance of public subscriptions.

Seva Sadan.—A *Seva Sadan* was started at Chapra in 1957 through the efforts of the Theosophical Society with public supports. The aim and object of the institution are to provide useful service to illegitimate and crippled persons by giving training in craft and cottage industries. The institution is in its formative stage and has not yet made much headway.

Association for social and moral hygiene.—An all-India Association for moral and social hygiene was formed in 1950 and in response to the humanitarian work its branches spread throughout the country. A branch of this association was also established at Chapra in 1956. The aims and objects of the association are to eradicate traffic in women and children and other allied evils allied to sex. To provide and manage institutions or homes for the rescued women and children and to make them self-supporting by useful training and to make a survey of the existing homes for women within the State and to study their conditions are other objects.

In view of the last object the Chapra branch of the association for moral and social hygiene made a survey of the fallen women (prostitutes) localised in the Bhagwan Bazar mahalla of the Chapra town. They made a door-to-door survey of the fallen women and suggested ways and means to eradicate the evils of prostitution. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the majority of the prostitutes wanted to discard their profession provided they have other source of livelihood. The rescued women are sent to Patna as the association has no rescue home.

Social Welfare Project, Chirand.

A Social Welfare Project was established in the village Chirand in 1956 for the welfare of the children and women. The welfare project is carried on in the contiguous 25 villages with a population of 25,000 in a radius of five miles. Apart from Chirand the other welfare centres are at Khalpura, Audhpura, Bhairopur and Mahrauli and thus each centre is attached with five villages

For the execution of the welfare project a *gram sevika, dai* and a craft mistress are appointed in each centre. Besides them a midwife has been appointed at Chirand to conduct labour cases and attend the expectant mother. These staff have itinerant duties for the execution of the welfare project. Much emphasis is given on sanitation, cleanliness of the children and on craftsmanship. It is a quasi-Government organisation headed by a non-official lady chairman.

Kishore-dal.—In the voluntary social service organisation the name of the *Kishore-dal* is also worth mentioning. The *Kishore-dal*, Chapra, was established in 1954 for the mental and physical development of the children between the age-group 4 to 14. As a part of their activities, Chapra *Kishore-dal* has started a Montessori school under the name of "*Sishu Bhawan*" since November, 1957. This school is becoming popular in the locality.

Mairwa Kustasram.—As mentioned before the Mairwa *Kustasram* was established in 1953. It is now a quasi-Government institution. In this asylum both curative and preventive measures are adopted.

Yatimkhana.—At Siwan there is an *yatimkhana* which is called *Yatimkhana-Islamia-Rizvi.* It is run by a managing committee, About 15 to 30 orphans and illegitimate children are kept in the *yatimkhana* where they get free lodging and fooding. A *Madrasa* is attached to the *yatimkhana* for the education of the orphan children. In 1958 the State Government made a grant of Rs. 400. It is mainly run by public subscriptions.

There is also a *yatimkhana* at Gopalganj which is attached with the *Madrasa Islamia,* Gopalganj. About 16 orphans are kept who receive free fooding and lodging. The expenditure on it is met by public subscriptions.

Christian Missionaries.—There are now three missions—Assemblies God Mission at Chapra, two Regions Beyond Missions, one at Dahiyama mohalla of the Chapra town and the other at Gopalganj. The Regions Beyond Mission at Gopalganj which is located at Tirbirwa mohalla of the Gopalganj town has earned good reputation in the locality. It has one homeopathic dispensary for the outdoor patients where about 40,000 patients are annually treated. It also maintains a leper clinic for outdoor treatment. The other two missions are only engaged in religious activities. The German Evangelical Lutheran Mission at Chapra and the Protestant Mission at Siwan have been closed.

Bharat Sevak Samaj.—The Saran branch of the *Bharat Sevak Samaj* was established in Chapra in 1953. It is an all-India organisation and as its name connotes was established to serve the people by doing development work. The *Bharat Sevak Samaj* of the Saran branch has 31 branches and the strength of its members enrolled to 1,069 up to February, 1959, out of which 93 were females. The *Samaj* has performed useful service in the flood-stricken areas in 1953-54. It formed a flood relief committee under the presidentship of Dr. Sayyed Mahmud and alleviated the sufferings of the people by relief. It distributed clothes and also rendered monetary help. Every member of the *Bharat Sevak Samaj* has to offer *shramdan,* i.e., manual labour. Due to *shramdan* it has repaired 25 miles of old roads, constructed 3 new wells, 3 schools and 2 miles of embankment. The *Samaj* has launched camp movement in Saran and thereby achieved a great success. Out of 21 camps there are 3 camps for women. Some foreign women also participated in the ladies camp of Hathua in 1956. The women are doing useful service in the society by sanitation drive. Sanitation drives are carried on twice in a year both in the urban and rural areas.

Depressed Classes League.

This organisation was established for the propagation of national ideas among the Harijans. During the Round Table Conference in

1932-33 this League was an independent organisation although it had affiliations with the Indian National Congress.

Sri Jagjiwan Ram, Railway Minister, Government of India, and a few others have recently organised the League throughout India. There is a very active branch in Saran district which is closely associated with social reforms among the Harijans. In 1936-37 Elections the League in collaboration with the Congress had secured 14 out of 15 seats. It is now essentially a body for bringing in social reforms and removal of untouchability.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLACES OF INTEREST.

ALIGANJ SEWAN.—*See* Siwan.

AMARPUR.—A village situated in the south-west of the Siwan subdivision, two miles west of Darauli. The area of the village is 1,044 acres with a population of 2,215 consisting of 1,061 males and 1,154 females according to the census of 1951. The number of occupied houses was 312. Out of the total population of 2,215 only 232 were enumerated as literates. It contains an upper primary school and a post office. There are ruins of a mosque of red brick on the bank of the river Gogra. According to tradition it was built during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan (1628—1658) under the supervision of his *naib* Amar Singh but the work was left incomplete. Local people say that the village derives its name from the builder of the mosque, Amar Singh.

AMBIKA ASTHAN.—*See* Ami.

AMI.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, situated about 14 miles east of Chapra on the Chapra-Sonepur road. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 329 acres and there were 180 occupied houses with a total population of 1,107 consisting of 487 males and 620 females, out of which 174 males and 51 females were literate. The village has a lower primary school.

It is also called Ambika Asthan as it has a temple dedicated to Ambika Bhawani. Legend connects this temple with Lord Siva and Sati. In the early ages, it is said, king Daksha performed a *Yagna* (sacrifice) but did not invite Siva to whom his daughter Sati was married. In grief that such an insult should have been offered to her husband, Sati threw herself into the sacrificial fire; Siva, wild with rage transfixed her dead body on the point of his trident and rushed hither and thither through the world which was threatened with destruction. But Vishnu, the preserver, came to the rescue and flung his discus (*chakra*) at the body of Sati and cut it to pieces. These pieces fell scattered over the earth and every place where any of them fell became a sanctuary One portion is said to have dropped on the spot where the temple now stands, and close by is pointed out the site of the sacrificial fire (*yajnakund*). An annual fair is held in the village in the month of *Chait*. Local Pandits also identify the place with Raja Surath.

ANDAR.—A village in the Siwan subdivision situated on the Siwan-Andar road. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village is 526 acres, number of occupied houses 279 with a population of 1,700 consisting of 851 males and 849 females out of which 355 males and 20 females were literates. It has a lower primary school, high school, a library, a dispensary and a veterinary

dispensary. It has a Block office under the charge of a Block Development Officer. Andar is birth place of Maulana Sayyad Mazrul Haq who had played an important role during freedom movement on behalf of the Indian National Congress. Sadakat Ashram in Patna owes its origin largely to him.

BANIAPUR.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated on the Chapra-Salimpurghat road. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 287 acres, number of occupied houses 44 with 367 persons consisting of 170 males and 197 females. It has a police-station, a dispensary, an inspection bungalow, a veterinary dispensary and a lower primary school. There is a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer. A cattle fair is held on the occasion of the *Vivah Panchami* (December) which lasts for ten days. The sale of cattle is usually brisk.

BASNAULI GANGAR.—*See* Maharajganj.

BHOREY.—A village in the Gopalganj subdivision situated on the Mirganj-Bhorey road. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 1,009 acres, number of occupied houses 471 with 1,576 persons with 788 males and 788 females out of which 296 males and 66 females were literates. It has a lower primary, middle and a high school, a *gram panchayat* and a library. It has also a police-station and a dispensary. It has a small village market where people buy essential commodities. There is a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

CHANDPUR.—A small village situated in the vicinity of Maharajganj. Some relics have recently been found in the village which seem to be quite old. These relics have been sent to the Archæological Department for investigation.

CHAPRA.—Headquarters of the district situated on an old bank of the river Gogra, close to its former junction with the river Ganga. It is bounded on the north by the embankment of the North-Eastern Railway, on the south by the old bed of the river Gogra, on the east by some comparatively high land stretching from the river to the railway embankment and on the west by a *nullah*. The inhabited portions of the town lie principally to the east and the west. The western portion was once the older *mahalla* of the town and occupied by business people including the Marwaris. But now with the change of the main streams of Ganga and later by Gogra, its commercial prosperity has declined. The newer or eastern portion grew up round the Civil Courts and public offices, most of which were constructed a century before. This *mahalla* is Sahebganj and is now the chief *bazar* of Chapra. The name apparently is derived from the fact that the Dutch, English and other traders lived in this area and later it became the civil lines occupied by the planters, officials, etc. In the midst of and round both portions of the town are groves of mango trees and open spaces.

Much of the thickness of the grove and the arboriculture of the open spaces have declined.

The length of the town is about six miles from east to west while the average breadth does not exceed 1¼ miles. It is only, however, the central portion of the town, from Sahebganj to Daulatganj, that is urban in nature; the eastern and western extremities are semi-rural. Chapra is a growing town. The population as enumerated in the census from 1901 to 1951 is given below :-

Year.			Persons.	Males.	Females.
1901	..	..	45,901	22,361	23,450
1911	..	..	42,373	21,601	20,772
1921	..	..	42,415	22,492	19,923
1931	..	..	47,448	25,934	21,514
1941	..	..	55,142	29,697	25,445
1951	..	..	64,309	33,939	30,370

The census of 1901 and 1911 showed progressive decrease in the population compared with 1891 chiefly due to plague. By 1921 there was a slight excess over the number of 1911 though the total was still less than in 1901. From 1931 the population had shown an increase. An older account of Chapra is found in the *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Vol. XI, published in 1877, where W. W. Hunter mentions that "Chapra is situated on the north or left bank of the river Ganges.* It is said that the river formerly flowed close by the town; but at present its main channel is about one mile to the south.......... Though Chapra has suffered much commercially, since it has been deserted by the Ganges, it is still a place of some importance. There are many large and wealthy bankers. The *bazar* runs from east to west and is somewhat narrow. Most of the houses in it are double storeyed with projecting verandahs. Goods of all kinds can be procured, pottery and brass utensils forming a speciality. There is a race-course between the Sonepur and Rewaghat roads, but no race-meetings have been held for some years past. At the end of the last century the French, Dutch, Portuguese and English, had factories at Chapra. Saran was then famous for its saltpetre and the Chhapra mark was especially esteemed; but this trade has now for many years been on the decline".

Though the commercial prosperity of the town had suffered since the recession of the Ganga and later by the Gogra, it is a place of some importance. Its position on the borders of Uttar Pradesh and a river front assure a considerable trade. The railway system clears a large passenger and goods traffic. The number of prosperous

* The name of the river Ganges is Ganga and this term is now used. It is a matter of investigation how the word Ganges came to be used from the days of early British advent. (P. C. R. C.)

mercantile firms and banks is not, however, as large as it used to be. The Katra area which is the oldest *bazar*, runs from east to west along the old bank of the Gogra and like all old *bazars* is narrow road with shops on either side and very congested. Some of the houses are double storeyed with projecting verandahs. Some houses have fine carved wood-work. But the majority of the houses are brick-built with mud plaster and unattractive. There are some small factories in this area. The shellac industry which was mentioned in the old *District Gazetteer of Saran* (1906) has faded out.

The centre of trade activity has shifted from Katra to Sahebganj which has grown around the Civil Court. Big cloth merchants, bullion merchants and *kirana* merchants have their shops here. One of the *muhallas* of the town is called Ratanpura and according to one account was the capital of Raja Ratna Sen of the Hindu period and erected there a temple known as the temple of Ratneshwar Nath. The temple of Dharma Nathji is pointed out as the former temple of Ratneshwar Nath Mahadeo. But another tradition is that the temple of Dharma Nathji was built by a *sadhu* (mendicant) named Dharam Nath. There is a further story that the *sadhu* once saved the life of a shepherd woman by his spiritual power and the temple was raised. The main image is the Siva *linga* (phallus) about four inches in diameter having *samadhis* of Dharam Nath and his ten disciples nearby. On every Monday there is rush of devotees. There is also a goddess known as Kotki Devi said to be the tutelary goddess of the fort of Raja Ratna Sen. Close by the temple of the Dharma Nathji is the Government Sanskrit High School and Marwari Sanskrit College. There is a temple of Uma Nath in the Dahiama mahalla. According to tradition the *ashram* of the famous sage *Dudhichi Risi* was somewhere here. There is a Kali temple (Kalibari) near the Chapra Katchery railway station built by the efforts of the Bengali community.

At the west end of the town is the former *sarai* or rest house, a large square building with blank walls. The entrance from the east leads through two handsome iron gates. In front of it is a fenced space and a masonry tank. This tank has three gates meant for males, females and animals. But the animals are allowed to drink water only and their bath is prohibited. It is said that this tank is connected with another serpentine tank lying at a distance of about two hundred yards north-west of the underground *nala* (channel). The building was constructed by a wealthy banker, the late Shah Banwari Lal Sahu who donated this building along with some lands to the Chapra Municipality which was subsequently given to the Rajendra College on a nominal rent. There are two municipal markets one near the *sarai* and the other to the east of Sahebganj.

The other important *mahalla* of the town is the Bhagwan Bazar. The Chapra Railway Station is locally known as Bhagwan Bazar Station. Bhagwan Bazar has some engineering concerns and shops

besides a large number of residential houses. The District Jail, Chapra, and the Sadar Hospital are also located in it. This hospital was erected in 1856 by public subscription supplemented by a donation from the late Shah Banwari Lal to commemorate a visit of the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. A female ward was subsequently built at the cost of the Maharani of Hathwa.

Besides Civil, Criminal Courts and other official buildings it has three Degree colleges. The Rajendra College is on the west limits of the town, the Jagdam College is located to the north of the town across the North-Eastern Railway and the third college is the Jai Prakash Mahila Mahavidyalaya, a girls' college near the Collector's bungalow. This girls' college is the second of its kind in the Tirhut Division, the first being the Mahantha Darsan Das College at Muzaffarpur. Near the Jai Prakash Mahila Mahavidyalaya is the Mahila Silpa Vidyalaya which is an industrial school and imparts training in handicrafts, such as knitting, weaving, tailoring and embroidery. Close by it is the Government high school for girls. Apart from these there are six high schools for boys. There are two libraries—one Rajendra Library near the temple of Dharma Nathji and the other State Central Library. There are two clubs (Saran Club and Chapra Club), a Circuit House, Dak bungalow and a church. There is a branch of the Region Beyond Mission Society and of an American Mission Society called the Assemblies of God. There are two railway stations, the main station as mentioned before at Bhagwan Bazar (Chapra) where all trains stop and another station Chapra Katchery nearer the courts. The branch line to Mashrak takes off from this smaller station. Besides, there are three cinema houses and three large tanks, known as Elgin Tank (now Rajendra *Sarovar*), civil court tank and a tank near the Rajendra College. The tanks are now not well looked after. A fourth tank was excavated in 1958 just opposite the Circuit House. There is an electric power house which supplies electricity to the town. There is a small aerodrome where small plane lands.

The roads in the town are mostly metalled, they radiate to important places in the district like Sonepur, Maharajganj, Siwan, Guthni and the principal *ghats* on the Gandak, such as Salimpur, Sattar and Rewa. The drains of the town are *katcha* and awfully dirty. There are two water towers each having the capacity of one lakh gallons.

Portions of the town are liable to inundation. Such areas naturally have huts with wattled walls and thatched roofs as the houses may be washed away. The settlements had the distinctive name of *Chhapra* from the Hindi word *Chhappar* meaning a thatched roof. The name of the town appears to have been derived from this.

The Gogra formerly flowed close to the town but now its main channel is some miles to the south in the cold weather. The *nullah* which indicates the old bed of the river along the southern boundary

of the town is partially filled up with water when the Gogra is in flood and is connected with the main stream both on the west and east opposite Ajaibganj and Telpa. The town is protected from annual inundation by the high river bank on the south, by an embanked road, known as Mahabir Prasad's *bandh* on the north and by the Salimpur *ghat* road and the railway embankment on the west; shutters can be fixed in the openings in the latter to keep out flood water. The town was flooded in 1874 and would have suffered the same fate in 1890 if the Salimpur *ghat* road had not been raised and strengthened previously. The flooding of the town in 1921 was largely due to the fact that the shutters in the railway embankment were not closed in time and one could not be shut at all. The water which floods the town if it is not held back generally comes up from the Gogra by the Ajaibganj *nullah* and branching off in two directions, terminates in a swamp about eight miles north of the town. It is led through the town by the Khanwa *nullah* to this *chaur* and by this means the main drains are flushed, some of the public tanks are filled and the crops in the *chaur* are irrigated. The water can be let in and shut off by the main sluice at Sahebganj.

It is mentioned in Hunter's Statistical Account that at the end of the eighteenth century the English, Dutch, French and Portuguese had factories at Chapra. The Dutch were here as early as the middle of the seventeenth century and the English by the beginning of the eighteenth century. There is an old Dutch cemetery near Karinga on the Baniapur road at the north-west of the town, containing a mausoleum erected to the memory of one J. V. H. who died in 1712. These initials stand for Jacobus Van Horn, the Dutch Chief in Bihar, who died soon after the Dutch had abandoned Patna and withdrawn to Singhia in consequence of the exactions of Farrukhsiyar. In the old English cemetery at Karinga are two monuments erected to the memory of the men of the Naval Brigade who died at Chapra in 1859. A new cemetery has been since opened at the opposite end of the town beyond the old race-course which lies between the Sonepur and Rewa *ghat* roads. When the indigo planters were prosperous, races used to be held here annually, but the last were in 1899 and the land of the race-course has been sold.

The Chapra Municipality was established in 1864. The area of the Municipality is 7½ square miles and is divided into four wards. The number of rate-payers in 1957-58 was 12,930, representing 36.3 per cent of the population. The arrangement of conservancy of the town is not satisfactory. The drains usually remain silted for want of proper drainage system. The total length of drain in 1958 was 53 miles (10 miles *pucca* and 43 miles *katcha*). It maintains 33.73 miles metalled and 7.09 miles unmetalled roads. Primary education is compulsory in the municipal area of Chapra.

The opening of colleges, hospitals and other institutions have attracted a sizeable educated and cultured people, such as professors, doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers.

CHAPRA SUBDIVISION.—The headquarters or the Sadar subdivision of the district, occupying its south-east extremity and lying between 25°-39′ and 26°-14′ N. and 84°-23′ and 85°-12′ E. with an area of 1,043 square miles with 1,528 villages and two towns, Chapra and Revelganj. It is a fertile tract of rich alluvial soil, bounded on the east by the Gandak, on the south by the Ganga and on the west by the Gogra and on the north by the Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions. The population of the subdivision is as follows :—

Year.	Population.
1891	10,29,639
1901	9,27,718
1911	9,84,248
1921	9,14,026
1931	9,73,116
1941	11,35,903
1951	12,56,306

The density per square mile was 864 in 1921, 1,088 in 1941 and 1,204 in 1951. Sonepur at the junction of the Gandak and Ganga is an important railway centre, as well as the scene of a great annual fair and bathing festival. The subdivision has 13 police-stations, namely, Chapra town, Chapra mufassil, Bhagwanpur, Revelganj, Baniapur, Garkha, Manjhi, Ekma, Parsa, Marhowrah, Mashrak, Sonepur and Dighwara. For the development of the National Extension Service the subdivision is divided into seven Blocks, namely, Baniapur, Jalalpur, Ekma, Manjhi, Sonepur, Garkha and Marhowrah. Each Block is under the charge of a Block Development Officer.

CHIRAND.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, six miles east of Chapra, on the river Gogra. The village is connected by the Chapra-Sonepur metalled road. The Ganga formerly flowed past the village which must at one time have been a place of some note as it lent its name to Chapra which used to be called Chiran Chapra by people of other district, Chiran being an abbreviation of Chirand. The total area of the village in the census of 1951 was 251 acres, 227 occupied houses and total population was 1,362 consisting of 602 males and 760 females out of which 200 males and 15 females were enumerated as literates. It has lower and upper primary schools.

Historically speaking Chirand is the only place in Saran which is connected with antiquity. The ruins of the ancient mounds tell that it has seen the rise and fall of the Buddhism, Hinduism and the Muslims. Its remains are connected with all the historic periods of India. Few traces of its former greatness are left but there are some large mounds marking the ruins of an ancient city. One high

mound, on which four temples have been built, marks the remains of an old fort; and the hermitage of Rishi Chyavana and two small tanks, called Jiach Kundu and Brahma Kundu in the Chirand Mahatmya, are pointed out in different portions of the site as vestiges of the ancient Hindu period. A fair takes place every year on the last day of the month of *Kartik,* at the former spot which is called Chyavana-*ashrama*. Chirand is popularly known as the capital of king Mayuradhvaja and the tradition still exists that he and his queen sawed down their son in order to satisfy the craving for human flesh of Siva who came in the disguise of an old Brahman to test his generosity. Satisfied by this practical proof of the king's hospitality, Siva restored his son to life.

On the top of the principal mound there is an old mosque with an inscription in the Kufic style of character over the doorway. This mosque must have been built out of the ruins of some large ancient Hindu temple, for eight square Hindu pillars, or rather pilasters, line the inside of the walls. The inscription over the doorway is in three double lines and appears to bear the name of Hussain Shah, king of Bengal, from 1493 to 1519: presumably these Musalman rulers destroyed an ancient Hindu temple at Chirand and built the mosque out of its materials. Some evidence. at least, of the antiquity of the temple, and probably also of some other buildings formerly connected with it or surrounding it, is afforded by the size of the bricks, the most ancient of which are 17¾ inches long, 10 inches broad and 3½ inches thick. the smallest being 12¾ by 9½ inches and 12½ by 8 inches. A portion of the ancient elevated ruined site has been cut away by the river channel, showing a high cliff of earth, full of large ancient bricks, and pierced by numerous shafts of ancient wells of narrow diameter lined with cylinders of red earthenware.

Chirand is sometimes also called Cherand and is said to have been founded by, or to derive its name from, the Cheros, once a ruling race in Saran. There seems to be no doubt at least that Chirand was an ancient Buddhist town, for images of Buddha and other figures of the Buddhist period have been found here. Mr. Carlleyle indeed conjectured that Chirand "the most ancient place in the whole of the Saran district" may have been the site of the Drona or Kumbha *stupa,* erected over the vessel with which the relics of Buddha were measured after his cremation. He says :—

"I think that the site of the Kumbha *stupa* should really be looked for among the mounds of ancient ruins at Chirand. For instance, the mosque of Hussain Shah, which was built out of the materials of an ancient Hindu temple, is situated on the summit of a high mound of ruins, which might just possibly contain the ruins of a *stupa* buried in its interior. It is worthy of remark, with regard to the name of the place, that *chiran* and *chirayu* mean ancient; while the root *chir*

implies the act of cutting asunder, splitting, rending, dividing or division, and might just possibly refer to the division of the remains of Buddha into eight parts. each equal to a *drona,* as measured by a *kumbha* of that capacity, which vessel was afterwards enshrined in a *stupa* which was therefore called the Kumbhan *stupa.* But the place where this was done may have been called the dividing, or the place of division; and the memory of some such significance may have been reserved in such a name as Chiran."*

Dr. Hoey indeed goes farther in the belief that Chirand was an ancient Buddhist site and identifies it with the great Buddhist capital Vaisali. This theory he advances with the following remarks: "We know that when Buddha left Magadha for the last time he went towards Vaisali. The gate by which he left Pataliputra, was afterwards called the Gautama gate, and the place where he crossed the Ganges was called thereafter the Gautama ferry. The Gautama Ghat is still known east of Revelganj. We also have the story of Ananda's leaving Pataliputra for Vaisali, and we read when he reached the Ganges, he discovered that the people of Vaisali had come out to meet him in the hope of obtaining his body, as they knew he was about to die and they wished to do it honour; but he was pursued by Ajatsatru's army which had been sent with the same object. He therefore surrendered himself to death (entered *samadhi)* on an island in the river, and his body parted in two, so that the rival claimants obtained equal parts. This story is preserved for us in the name of Chirand, which is simply *chidra-anga,* the divided body.

"It is very remarkable that there is a local tradition at Chirand based on this story. It is this: There was a king at Chirand named Moraddhuj (Mayuradhvaj) in the Dwaparayuga who professed great devotion to the gods. Krishna determined to put the king's faith to the test, and came one day to his palace disguised as a mendicant, and asked for the right half of the king's body for some sacrificial purpose. He explained to the king that his wife and son must each hold one end of a saw *(ara)* and saw him in two, but if he shed tears the gift would not be acceptable. The king agreed and the operation commenced but presently he began to shed tears from his left eye. The mendicant reminded the king that the professed gift was liable to rejection, but the latter explained that the left eye wept because the right half of the body was alone being taken and the other left. Krishna was pleased with this devotion that he exercised his divine power, stopped the operation, restored the body to its former state and flung the saw away. It fell at Arrah in the Shahabad district, giving its name to that place. The story is certainly the same in origin as that told of Ananda. It is a Hindu version of facts underlying the Buddhist story. The conclusion to which I come is that

* Reports, Arch. Surv. Ind., Vol. XXII, 1885.

Vaisali did not lie on the east but on the west of the present Great Gandak. I shall presently fix it beyond doubt east of Chapra, probably at Chirand itself.

"There are some suggestions based on a study of the Mahaparinibbana Sutta which I must note. When Buddha had crossed the Ganges for the last time on his way to Vaisali, he first visited Kotigama and then Nadika, after which he arrived at the great city. There he was entertained by the courtesan Ambapali at her mango grove outside the city. From Vaisali Buddha went to Veluva where he was seized with the illness which eventually terminated his life. This is probably the modern Belwa north-east of Chirand. Near it we meet with such remarkable names as Sarnath Chak and Dharma Chak. Buddha then seems to have turned again towards Vaisali, for he went to the Chapala Chaitya, which the text would lead us to believe to have been near the city, if not in it. This name is probably either from Chapala (*Sans.*), a loose woman, and thus alludes to the concubine spoken of by the pilgrims; or from *chapa alaya* (*Sans.*), the bow-place where the bow was deposited. Anyhow, there can be no mistake as to the mound lying to the east of the town of Chapra, called Telpa. This is undoubtedly the Sanskrit *Talpa* 'a tower', and is that built for the mother of the thousand sons; and the site of Vaisali is therefore fixed. It is the modern Chirand, and spread along the banks of the Ganges east and west of the present town."*

For the revival of the ancient glory of Chirand some efforts have recently been taken by some of the distinguished people of the locality. The Chirand *Gram Sudhar Samiti* was started in 1940 on the teaching of Mahatma Gandhi. The *Samiti* maintains a library and a girls' lower primary school. There is an archæological society for collection and preservation of the ancient finds. A few coins and some earthen wares highly glazed and polished have been collected. On the reverse side of the coin there seems to be the image of Kanishka and on the obverse there is an image of a running goddess either of *Agni* or *Vayu* which it proves will take back her history to Sunga period (C. 78 A. D.). The earthen vessels of terracotta also substantiate this fact. But so long they have not been corroborated by other evidences it would be only a speculation.

In 1956 for the development of the village a Welfare Extension Project was started consisting of 25 villages with a population of 25,000. It had five centres, the chief being in Chirand and the other are at Bhairopur, Mehrauri, Khalpura and Audhpur. Each centre is looked after by one *Gram Sevika*, one *dai* and one craft teacher. The *Gram Sevika* and the craft teacher teaches the children of the centre on the model of basic training while the *dai* attends the expectant mothers and conducts labour cases.

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* W. Hoey, Litt. D. *on the identification of Kusinara, Vaisali and other places*— J. A. S. B., no. 1. 1900. *See* also Notes on *Chirand in the district of Saran*, by Nundolal Dey, J. A S. B., no. 2. 1903.

DARAULI.—A village in the Siwan subdivision, situated 44 miles to the north-west of Chapra, on the Chapra-Guthni road and on the north bank of the river Gogra. It is said that Darauli was founded on the name of Dara Sikoh, the eldest son of the Emperor Shah Jahan and its name was Darawali which is changed into Darauli. Two miles to the west is the village of Amarpur where as already stated are the ruins of a fine mosque of red brick, built by *naib* Amar Singh during the reign of Shah Jahan. The area of the village according to the census of 1951 was 852 acres, 196 occupied houses and population was 1,400 with 680 males and 720 females out of which 154 males and 21 females were literates. It has a dispensary, sub-registry office, a police-station and both Hindi and Urdu lower primary schools. There is a ferry to the Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, carrying a considerable traffic. Darauli *ghat* is a sub-station of the Indian General Navigation Company but the suspension of the Navigation Company in 1958 has affected the trade of the place adversely. A *mela* is held on the *Kartik Purnima* day largely attended by the people of Ballia and Gorakhpur. There is a block office under the charge of a Block Development Officer.

DARIAGANJ OR DORIGANJ.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, 7 miles east of Chapra. According to tradition it was formerly a large grain-market standing at the confluence of the rivers Ganga and Gogra. The river-borne traffic of the place was considerable but owing to the shitting of the river Ganga, the commercial prosperity of Doriganj is on the decline. Though Doriganj is just opposite to the river Sone but owing to the change in the river course and lack of facility for transport by rail, boats carrying sand generally anchor at Dighwara *ghat* and from there it is transported by rail. Two miles upstream from Doriganj is Sherpur *ghat* where passengers cross the Ganga from Arrah.

A large number of Hindus go to the place for bathing at different festivals. It is said that the village was originally one of the *tolas* or hamlets of Chirand and that the whole *taluk* consisting of 42 villages formerly belonged to the Choudhuri of Chirand, Choudhuri Daria Singh, whose descendants still reside here. It is a small village and its population in 1921 was 209. The population of the village is not given in the *District Census Handbook, Saran,* published in 1956. The population does not appear to be more than a few hundreds and less than one thousand.

DIGHWA DUBAULI.—A village in the extreme east of the Gopalganj subdivision, 35 miles north of Chapra and 25 miles south-east of Gopalganj. It is also a railway station of the North-Eastern Railway of the Chapra-Mashrak Section. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 3,815 acres, number of occupied houses 950 with a population of 7,225 consisting of 3,790 males and 3,435 females out of which 880 males and 97 females were literates. It contains

a post office, a lower primary school and a high school. It contains some ancient remains, of which Mr. Carlleyle has given the following accounts: "At Dighwa Dubauli I found an ancient site and two extraordinary pyramidal-shaped mounds. These two extraordinary mounds are situated close to the south-east of the village, and east and west of each other. The western mound is situated almost adjoining the south-eastern end of the village, and the eastern mound is situated at the distance of 640 feet to the east-south-east of the other, and close to the road. Each of these mounds is of a pyramidal shape, with four corners at the base projecting considerably outwards, so that a ground plan of one of these mounds would resemble a four pointed star surmounted centrically by a cone." After giving the dimensions of these mounds, which are of great size, Mr. Carlleyle goes on to say: "These mounds appeared to be formed of clay, but mixed with small fragments of brick and pottery. At the distance of 950 feet to the south of the eastern mound, there is a roundish-shaped mound of moderate height, with a horizontal diameter of about 200 feet from north to south, and about 140 feet from east to west. There is an old well here. Across the road to the north of the village there is a portion of the mound, which appears as if cut off by the road from the large flat mound, on which the village Dighwa Dubauli itself stands. These mounds are said to have been the work of Chero-Chai, i.e., of the Cheros, an aboriginal race who seem to have once been powerful in this part of the country, but who now inhabit the hills to the south of the Ganges."

In this village was found the historical copper-plate, known as the Dighwa Dubauli plate and dating back to 761-2 A.D., of which an account has been given in Chapter II. "Either", says Dr. Fleet, "It was dug out of a field some years ago (before 1864) by a Brahman of Chapra, or the ancestors of the then owner found it in a temple in a ruined Musalman fort; but it was so long ago that they did not seem to have any distinct tradition about it, nor to be able to give any authentic information on the subject". [Reports, Arch. Surv. Ind., Vol. XXII, 1885; J. F. Fleet, *Sanskrit and old Kanarese Inscriptions (The Dighwa Dubauli plate)*, Indian Antiquary, 1886.]

DIGHWARA.—A village situated on the North-Eastern Railway 18 miles east-south and east of Chapra. It is a chief centre of the grain and hide trade. Its area in the census of 1951 was 822 acres, the number of the occupied houses was 650 and population 3,617 with 1,806 males and 1,811 females out of which 743 males, 82 females were literates. It has a police-station, post office, district board inspection bungalow, lower primary, upper primary, middle, high and basic schools, *gram panchayat* and a library. General Cunningham was at one time inclined to consider that this locality was the site of the ancient Buddhist *stupa* known as the Drona or Kumbha *stupa*. Local people trace the name to a celebrated sage called Chandramuni or Dirghwara.

The river-borne traffic of Dighwara is considerable due to its position on the river Ganga. Large boats carrying goods anchor at Dighwara. Sand of the river Sone is exported to Dighwara through boats and from there it is sent to different places by rail. Besides grain, kerosene oil, coal and grocery are transported to Dighwara from Patna through boats. The freight charge of a boat from Patna to Dighwara for coal, grain and kerosine oil is Rs. 5, Rs. 2-8-0 and Rs. 2, respectively.

DOMAIGARH.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated on the Gogra 28 miles north-west of Chapra. It has an area of 1,255 acres, the number of occupied houses 147, population 1,120 consisting of 474 males and 646 females out of which 104 males and 6 females were found to be literates in the census of 1951. It is a centre of the trade in *sal* wood and boats and is called after a *fakir* Dome *Pir* who is said to have resided there.

DON.—A village in the Siwan subdivision situated near-by Darauli. There are remnants of a fort (*garh*) which is said to be connected with the famous hero of the Mahabharat, Acharyya Dronacharyya, the guru of both *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 442 acres, number of occupied houses 61 with 710 persons consisting of 343 males and 367 females out of which 32 males and 5 females were literates.

DUMARSAN.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, 28 miles north of Chapra on the Chapra-Sattar *ghat* road. It is also a railway station on the Mashrak line on the North-Eastern Railway. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 312 acres, the number of occupied houses 203 and population 1,447 with 729 males, and 718 females out of which 158 males were literates. It has a lower and upper primary schools. It derives its importance from a *Ram Nawami* fair held annually in the month of Chait in which horses, buffaloes and bullocks are sold in large number. Its importance has increased due to the extension of Mashrak-Thawe section of the North-Eastern Railway.

EKMA.—A village on the North-Eastern Railway, 18 miles north-west of Chapra. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 2,182 acres, the number of occupied houses was 674, population 4,787 consisting of 2,060 males and 2,727 females out of which 801 males and 61 females were literates. It contains a post office, railway station, lower primary, middle and high schools, a Sanskrit *pathsala*, library and a *gram panchayat*. There is also a police-station and district board inspection bungalow. It is one of the centres of the grain traffic in the district owing to its connection with Chapra, Siwan, Manjhi, Darauli and Mashrak by good roads. Imports consist of rice and other foodgrains and exports chiefly of molasses and linseed.

EKSARI.—A village near Ekma in the Sadar subdivision where the image of a rare dancing Ganesh and two beautiful images of Vishnu

were found. The three images were acquired under Treasure Trove Act in December, 1944, and are now in Patna Museum. Local tradition asserts that the original residence of Eksaria Bhumihar Brahman was Eksari. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 406 acres, number of occupied houses 133 with 944 population consisting of 413 males and 531 females out of which 121 males and 29 females were literates. It has a lower primary school.

GARKHA.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated on the Chapra-Rewa ghat road. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 639 acres, number of occupied houses 322 with 1,886 persons with 848 males and 1,038 females out of which 499 males and 120 females were literates. It has a lower primary, middle and a high school, a post office, a *gram panchayat* and a library. It has a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer. It has also a small village market where people buy the essential commodities. This place played a prominent part in the Non-co-operation and later freedom movements.

GODNA.—*See* Revelganj.

GOPALGANJ.—Headquarters of the subdivision of the same name. It lies on the west bank of the Gandaki river, 2 miles from the main Gandak Embankment, 58 miles north from Chapra and 21 miles north-east of Siwan with which it is connected by good metalled road and also by a loop line of the North-Eastern Railway running from Siwan to Thawe and on to Gorakhpur. It is a growing township. It was made the subdivisional headquarters in 1875 when it was only a tiny hamlet. It has developed considerably since then. Its population in 1951 was 14,213 as against 1,537 in 1921. The extension of the Mashrak-Thawe line and the sugar factory at Harkhua brought in commercial prosperity to Gopalganj. Its railway station is Harkhua from where it is only at a distance of 1¼ miles. Besides the court of the Subdivisional Officer and the Munsif, it has a college, high school, hospital, police-station, sub-registry office, sub-jail, club and a park. The sanitation of the town is under the management of the notified area committee.

GOPALGANJ SUBDIVISION.—Northern subdivision of the district lying between 26°-12′ and 26°-39′ N. and 83°-54′ and 84°-55′ E. with an area of 786 square miles. It is bounded on the east by the Gandak river, on the south by the Siwan subdivision, on the west and north by Gorakhpur district in Uttar Pradesh. It forms an alluvial plain bounded by the Gandak and intersected by the five smaller rivers, which flow in a southerly direction, namely the Jharhi, Khanwa, Daha, Gandaki and Dhanai. The population of the subdivision was 6,50,389 in 1921, 6,88,499 in 1931, 7,60,561 in 1941 and 8,22,854 in 1951, density being 1,048 in 1951 as against 968 in 1941. For administrative purposes the subdivision is divided into

two revenue thanas, Gopalganj and Mirganj, and into seven police-stations, namely, Mirganj, Bhorey, Katia, Kuchaikot, Gopalganj, Barauli and Baikunthapur. The subdivision was created in 1875.

GUTHNI.—A village 54 miles north-west of Chapra on the east bank of the little Gandak river which here forms the boundary between Bihar and Uttar Pradesh; the river Gogra is in the south. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 1,211 acres, the number of occupied houses 741, population 3,649 consisting of 1,803 males and 1,846 females out of which 469 males and 56 females were literates. It contains a post office, police-station, lower primary, upper primary, middle and high schools. It was formerly a centre of the sugar manufacture of Saran, large quantities of molasses and unrefined sugar being exported from here by *beparis* to Patna and Uttar Pradesh. But with the establishment of modern sugar factories nearer the railway has diminished its importance. Guthni has a Block office under the control of a Block Development Officer.

GORIAKOTHI.—A village in the Siwan subdivision situated near Sidhwalia. The area of the village according to the census of 1951 was 565 acres, number of occupied houses 342 with a population of 1,753 consisting of 893 males and 860 females out of which 290 males and 136 females were literates. It has a lower primary school, middle school and a high school, a *gram panchayat* and a library. It has a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

HASANPURA.—A village in the Siwan subdivision, 13 miles south of Siwan on the bank of the Dhanai river. The total area of the village in the census of 1951 was 368 acres, number of occupied houses 160, population 1,655 consisting of 802 males and 853 females out of which 135 males and 14 females were literates. It is said that it was founded by Makdum Saiyid Hasan Chisti, a saint who came from Arabia to India and settled here. He founded a *khankah* or religious institutions for the upkeep of which and of his *dargah* or tomb an endowment of land was granted by the emperor of Delhi. The village contains the remains of a large mosque and the *dargah* of the saint which is visited by both Hindus and Muslims. The grave is a large open court to the west of the village. In front of it is a basalt image of Vishnu but it has been ruthlessly treated. It is regarded as an inauspicious fiend who has turned into stone by the holy Makdum and must not be raised or placed erect. It contains no inscription but its style shows it to belong to about the seventh century A. D.

HATHUA.—A village in the Gopalganj subdivision, 2½ miles west of Mirganj. The area of the village according to the census of 1951 was 261 acres, the number of occupied houses 597, population 2,908 consisting of 1,419 males and 1,489 females out of which 372 males and 79 females were found to be literates. It was the seat

of Hathua Raj. Hathua has the palace, a large and imposing structure with a fine *Durbar* hall and a number of other fine Raj buildings. There are also a well-laid-out public garden, a library, a post office and a large hospital known as the Victoria Hospital with a statue of Queen Victoria. There are lower, middle and high schools besides a college known as Gopeshwar College, Hathua. All these institutions are sponsored by the Raj. At Hathua there is a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer and *a gram panchayat*.

About Hathua Raj the last District Gazetteer mentions as follows :—

> "An estate situated for the most part in a compact block in the north-west of Saran, but also comprising property in the Champaran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Shahabad and Patna districts of Bihar, in Darjeeling and Calcutta in Bengal and in the Gorakhpur and Benares districts of the United Provinces. It has an area of about 800 square miles of which 600 are in Saran. The rent-roll (including cesses) amounts to over Rs. 14 lakhs and the land revenue and cesses payable to Rs. 3⅓ lakhs.
>
> The Hathwa Raj family, which like the families of the Maharajas of Benares, Bettiah and Tikari is of the Babhan or Bhumihar Brahman caste, is one of the oldest of the aristocratic families of Bihar. This family, which was originally known as that of the Rajas of Husepur, claims an antiquity anterior to the Muhammadan conquest of India and is said to have been settled in Saran for more than a hundred generations. The genealogical tree of the family shows a line of 103 Rajas, the patronymic of the earlier Rajas being Sen, which was changed to Singh with the 16th in descent, to Mal with the 83rd and to Sahi with the 87th of the line. The title of Maharaja seems to have been conferred by the Emperor of Delhi on the 86th Raja, Kalyan Mal, and that of Maharaja Bahadur on the 87th Khem Karan Sahi. The earlier history of the family is obscure, but tradition asserts that *pargana* Sipah, which forms a portion of the Raj, was wrested by Jubaraj Sahi, the great uncle of Fateh Sahi, from Raja Kabul Muhammad of Barharia. This chieftain was an Afghan noble, a partisan of the king of Bengal, who with other rebellious Afghan chiefs, raised the standard of rebellion in Bihar during the reign of Akbar. He was killed in battle, and his citadel taken and destroyed by Jubaraj Sahi, who was allowed by the emperor to retain *pargana* Sipah. Sardar Sahi, the immediate predecessor of Fateh Sahi, is said to have

invaded the principality of Majhauli in the Gorakhpur district and to have demolished the fortress. It is said that one of the conditions on which Sardar Sahi made peace with the Raja of Majhauli was that the latter should not display standards or drums, the ensigns of a ruling Raja, until he had retaken them, and that the Majhauli family still conforms to this condition, at any rate in the property belonging to the Hathwa Raj.

The authentic history of the Hathwa family commences with the time of Fateh Sahi, who was Maharaja of Husepur when the East India Company obtained the *diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765. He not only refused to pay revenue but resisted the troops sent against him and was with difficulty expelled from Husepur. He then retired to a large tract of forest between Gorakhpur and Saran, whence he frequently invaded British territory; a fuller account of the career of this rebel chief will be found in Chapter II. In consequence of his recusancy the zamindari of Husepur was attached, but he continued to hold that portion of his estate which was subject to the Nawab Vizier of Oudh and which is now in possession of his descendant, the Raja of Tamkohi in Gorakhpur. While the Raja thus waged war on the Company, his cousin, Basant Sahi remained loyal and assisted the British troops in their fruitless attempt to seize Fateh Sahi, by whom he was himself captured and put to death in 1775. For some years the estate remained under the direct management of Government but in 1791 Lord Cornwallis restored it to Chhattardhari Sahi, a grand-nephew of Fateh Sahi and grandson of Basant Sahi, in whose time the family seat was removed from Husepur to Hathwa.

The title of Maharaja Bahadur was not conferred on him till 1837 as it appears to have been thought that there could not be two Maharajas of Husepur, and as long as Fateh Sahi was living, it was considered out of the question to confer a similar title on Chhattardhari Sahi. He rendered valuable assistance at the time of Santal rebellion and also during the Mutiny, the services rendered by him in 1857 receiving the special commendation of Government. Chhattardhari Sahi who died in 1858 had two sons, both of whom died before their father, leaving two sons each; but during his lifetime he had nominated as his heir, Rajendra Pratap Sahi, his eldest great-grandson whose father had waived his right. The succession was contested by two other grandsons of the deceased Maharaja, one of whom, Bir Pratap Sahi, fought the case till it was decided by the

Privy Council in favour of Rajendra Pratap Sahi. The result of the litigation was to decide that the Hathwa Raj is an impartible Raj which descends under the *kulachar* or family rule of inheritance to the eldest son, to the exclusion of all his younger brothers, who are provided with sufficient land or an allowance in money for their maintenance.

Rajendra Pratap Sahi rendered good service in re-establishing order in the district at the close of the Mutiny and was rewarded by the grant of some confiscated villages in Shahabad which yielded a gross rental of Rs. 20,000 a year. He died in 1871 and was succeeded by his son Krishna Pratap Sahi, during whose minority the estate was under the Court of Wards, being managed for about three years by Mr. Hodgkinson of the Civil Service. Krishna Pratap Sahi attained his majority in 1874, received the title of Maharaja Bahadur and was made a K.C.I.E. in 1889. He died in 1896 and was succeeded by his son, the present Maharaja, Guru Mahadeo Asram Prasad Sahi. He was then only three years old and the estate was again taken under the management of the Court of Wards, it was released in 1911 when the young man was placed under the guardianship of his mother. In 1914 he was installed on the *gaddi* by Sir Charles Bailey, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar and Orissa, and also received the title of Maharaja Bahadur. The Kaiser-i-Hind gold medal was conferred on the Dowager Maharani in 1900 for the munificence of her charitable donations, the chief of which were a lakh of rupees to the Famine Fund of 1898 and half a lakh to Lady Curzon's scheme for providing medical aid for the women of India.

The family residence is at Hathwa, 12 miles north of Siwan, where Maharaja Krishna Pratap Sahi built a palace, a large modern building with one of the finest *durbar* halls in India. A fuller account of the Hathwa Raj will be found in *The Aristocracy of Bihar, Calcutta Review*, 1883, *The Chronicles of the Hathwa Raj, Calcutta Review*, 1897 and *A brief History of the Hathwa Raj* by late Sri Devendra Nath Dutt, Diwan of the estate."

The chequered history of the family of Hathua Raj was, in a way, history of Saran district. Hathua Raj was one of the famous landed aristocracy in Northern India and the family had patronised liberally education, art and culture. The various institutions and temples sponsored by Hathua Raj had received a temporary set back when the Raj vested in the State because of the statutory abolition

of the zamindary. The State Government provincialised the Raj Hospital in 1955. The present lineal descendant mostly lives in Patna. A visit to Hathua brings in the memory of the days when the Raj flourished and Hathua was a place of pomp, culture and amusement.

HUSEPUR.—A village situated in the north-west of the Gopalganj subdivision on the eastern bank of the Jharhi river. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 642 acres, the number of occupied houses 620, population 2,672 with 1,403 males and 1,259 females out of which 199 males and 32 females were enumerated as literates. The village has a lower, upper, middle, high, basic and Sanskrit schools, *gram panchayat* and a library. About Husepur the last District Gazetteer published in 1930 mentions as follows :—

> " Historically this village is of some interest as it was formerly the headquarters of the Maharajas of Hathwa when they were still ruler of the country. Contiguous to it to the north-east is Kalyanpur which was the site of a still earlier residence. There is little, however, left beyond mounds of bricks overgrown with jungle, which mark the ruins of old forts, and of moats now almost filled up. On one of the mounds of Husepur a bungalow was built by the father of the present Maharaja and was used by him as a country residence. The village also contains a modern temple, two large tanks and a big mango tope.
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> These obscure villages dotted with straggling huts were formerly places of importance, Kalyan Mal, who was the first of the line to receive the title of Maharaja from the Mughal Emperor, gave his name to the village of Kalyanpur, as well as to the surrounding *pargana* which is called Kalyanpur Kuari. At Kalyanpur the ruins of the fortress of Kalyan Mal are still traceable, besides large tanks and wells. Maharaja Khem Karan Sahi, descendant of Kalyan Mal, having removed his residence to Kalyanpur and built a fort there, that place was the headquarters of the family till Fateh Sahi became a rebel and was driven out of it by the British Government. A sketch of the career of Fateh Sahi has already been given elsewhere and it will be sufficient to mention here that he fled to Gorakhpur, then the independent territory of the Nawab Vizier of Oudh, and took shelter in the jungles of Tamkohi or Jogini which formed part of his estate.
>
> The outlaw made several unsuccessful attempts to regain Husepur and for many years led the life of a free-booter, making frequent raids into Saran. In the course of these raids he murdered several rent collectors, and also

his cousin, Basant Sahi, whom he beheaded at Jadopur, a village five miles to the north of Gopalganj where a big *pipal* tree marks the scene of his death. Basant Sahi had helped the Company's troops in getting information of the movements of Fateh Sahi, for whose capture, dead or alive, a reward of Rs. 10,000 had been offered. Enraged at the treachery of his cousin, Fateh Sahi learning that he was in camp at Jadopur with Mir Jamal, the rent-collector of the Company, sallied forth at night from the jungle of the Charakhia at the head of 1,000 horsemen, and at day-break attacked Mir Jamal, killed him and Basant Sahi, and sent the head of the latter to his widow at Husepur. The widow thereupon immolated herself on the funeral pyre, with thirteen or her handmaids, holding the head of her deceased husband in her lap. A big banyan tree in the jungle to the east of the ruined fort at Husepur still marks the site of her death; and there are fourteen small mounds of earth under the tree held sacred to the memory of the *sati*; members of the Hathwa Raj family do *puja* there, as also under the *pipal* tree at Jadopur where Basant Sahi was killed. Fateh Sahi, after the loss of his possessions in Saran, established himself at Tamkohi, and the present Maharaja of Tamkohi is his descendant.

The Husepur Raj remained under the Company's direct management for several years, but at the time of the Permanent Settlement it was settled with Chhattardhari Sahi, grandson of Basant Sahi, who was then a minor living under the protection of a Rajput follower of his grandfather, Dhajju Singh of Bharthui. Dhajju Singh was given some *jagir* land in recognition of his loyalty and his descendants hold the village of Phulwaria, 7 miles east of Gopalganj. Chhattardhari Sahi became the first Maharaja of Hathwa and moved the family residence from Husepur to Hathwa."

Husepur seems to have been a zamindari police thana in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was the scene of disturbances in 1844. From the old correspondence volumes preserved in the District Records Room, Chapra, it appears that riot, highway robbery and other crimes were rampant in the Husepur thana and the British authorities had to keep strict watch on this thana. A letter, dated the 13th November 1844, from the Joint Magistrate, to the officiating Magistrate, Saran, mentions that although peace had been restored in Husepur thana the cavalry should be kept there for sometime till the end of the survey. The Old Correspondence, Volume no. 13, throws a good deal of light on the affairs of Husepur. It appears that at one stage the Rajah of Bettiah and the Rajah of Hathua were at loggerhead for Bissumbarpur *diara* lands and that

the supporters of the two Rajahs were ready to murder any number of persons of other party. The quarrel between the heirs of Fateh Sahi and Chattardhari Sahi were responsible for many murders in the thana of Husepur. For a long time a regiment had been stationed there by the Government. This was withdrawn in 1802.

The riots of 1844 came in the wake of a lot of administrative turmoil which were due to the survey of the area when some men said to have been granted land by Fateh Sahi started quarrelling with the Rajah of Hathua after the confiscation of Fateh Sahi lands following the Koaree riot in 1781.

JADOPUR.—*See* Husepur.

JALALPUR.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated on the Chapra-Salimpur *ghat* road. The village is getting prominence due to the establishment of the Block office in 1956 under the charge of a Block Development Officer. The village does not find mention in the census table of 1951.

KARINGA.—A portion of Chapra town which was in possession of the Dutch till 1770. The Dutch cemetery at Karinga, with inscription dating as far back as 1712, is an object of interest. Both Taverneir and Berneir who had visited Bihar in 1666 had mentioned about the Holland Company trading in saltpetre in a town called Chapra. During the end of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century Saran was the centre of attraction of the Europeans trading company due to saltpetre. The mausoleum of the Dutch Governor Jacobus Van Horn is the reminiscent of its past importance. It is a substantially built grave and an edifice and it has withstood the weather for more than two centuries.

KHAJHUA.—A small but an important village in Siwan subdivision. The village has quite a few prominent Muslim families. It was the seat of Muslim culture and tradition.

KUCHAIKOT.—A village and police-station of the Gopalganj subdivision. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 1,063 acres, number of occupied houses 194 with a population of 1,596 consisting of 750 males and 846 females out of which 250 males and 40 females were literates. It has a post office, lower primary and a middle school, a *gram panchayat,* a dispensary and a veterinary dispensary There is a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

LAKRI DARGAH.—A village in the Siwan subdivision situated about 15 miles north of Siwan and 13 miles from Gopalganj is a place of pilgrimage for the Muhammadans. In 1951 the area of the village was 386 acres, the number of occupied houses 386, population was 2,224 with 950 males and 1,270 females out of which 155 males and 9 females were enumerated as literates. The village has a lower

primary, an upper primary and a middle school, a *gram panchayat* and a library.

The village is so called because it contains the tomb (*dargah*) of a Muhammadan saint, Shah Arzan of Patna, in which there is some good wood-work. The story runs that the saint, attracted by the solitude of the place, performed a *chila* here, i.e., gave himself up to religious contemplation for 40 days. He also, it is said, set up a religious establishment (*Khankah*) which was endowed by the Emperor Aurangzeb. The anniversary of the saint's death is celebrated on the 11th of Rabi-us-sani every year. It attracts a large crowd.

MAHARAJGANJ.—A village also called Basnauli Gangar, situated almost in the centre of the district. It is about 25 miles to the north-west of Chapra, 10 miles to the south-west of Siwan and 3 miles north-east of the Railway Station of Duraundha on the main line of the North-Eastern Railway with which it is connected by a branch as well as by a wide metalled road.

Regarding Maharajganj W. W. Hunter in *Statistical Account of Bengal*, Volume XI, published in 1877, had mentioned that "Next to Revelganj, it is the largest *bazar* in the district, especially for grain and spices. Grain is principally brought from north of Saran, from Champaran, and even from the *tarai* by *beparis*, who return with salt, piece goods, and iron. Both English iron from Patna and the native products from Chotanagpur are to be obtained. None of grain merchants do business beyond Revelganj and Patna. Maharajganj was formerly a large saltpetre depot, but that branch of industry has very much decayed. During the rains the grain traffic is almost entirely suspended, owing to the want of river carriage and the absence of suitable roads".

Maharajganj still is one of the important marts of the district. Grain is principally brought from Champaran and Muzaffarpur and also from West Bengal by rail. Pepper and other spices are exported to Champaran and the *Terai* in carts *via* Barauli and Salimpur *ghat,* and to the villages along the route which are not touched by the railways. A considerable trade in iron is also carried on here. Agricultural implement like *kodallis* (spades), buckets for well irrigation and pans for boiling molasses are manufactured here and exported chiefly to Champaran and Gorakhpur. There is a considerable business in *gur* and molasses. The saltpetre trade has decayed. The other commodities for trade are sunhemp, jute, garlic, turmeric, potatoes and ginger. It is also an important centre for the manufacture of handloom cloths. The population of Maharajganj in 1921 was 2,587. It is regretted that the village Maharajganj has not been included in the list of villages given under Maharajganj, police-station in the 1951 census tables and hence the population in 1951 cannot be given. The village has a police-station, post and

telegraph office, railway station, high school and a district board inspection bungalow. Maharajganj has also an Anchal office under a Circle Officer. It has two calendering factories. The village has been recently electrified.

MAIRWA.—A village in Siwan subdivision 13 miles west of Siwan, near the border of the district. In 1951 the area of the village was 603 acres, number of occupied houses 528, population 2,440 consisting of 1,401 males and 1,039 females out of which 421 males and 68 females were literates. The village has a post office, police-station, lower primary schools for girls and boys, a middle, high and Sanskrit schools, a dak bungalow, and a library. Mairwa is also a trade centre for sugar, molasses and grains. There is a celebrated shrine or *Brahma Asthan*, locally known as *Hari Baba Ka Asthan*, the shrine having been built over the relics of a *sadhu*. There is also a mound called *Chananniyam Dih* from an Ahirin woman who is now worshipped in a shed built in front of the dak bungalow which occupies the top of the mound. The shrine is on the bank of the Jharahi river and fairs are held there in *Kartik* and *Chait* months. It has a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

There is a leper home at Mairwa known as *Kustha Sevasram* founded on the 12th December 1953. From investigation it was found that the incidence of leprosy around Mairwa is higher than the other parts of the district. The leprosy clinic at Mairwa is reported to be doing useful work.

MANJHI.—A village and police-station in the Sadar subdivision, 12 miles west of Chapra on the Gogra. On the river bank are the remains of an old fort, which according to legend was built in the Hindu period by one Manjhi Makra of the Chero dynasty. There is another theory that the Rajas were Dusadhs or Mallahs by caste. The title Manjhi and the position of the fort on the river seem to favour the latter hypothesis. The fort is said to have come into the possession of Rajputs of the *Harihobans* clan whose headquarters were at Haldi in the Ballia district. The story runs that, enraged at the low-caste Manjhi demanding the hand of a Rajput *jagirdar's* daughter in marriage, they pretended to accede to his request; and after inviting him and all his relatives and *sardars* to the marriage feast, made them drunk and put them all to death. The *jagirdar* captured the fort and took possession of the Raj. It is said to have remained in the possession of this family till the reign of Shah Jahan, when it was given by that Emperor, with other *jagirs* in the district, to one Khemarjit Rai of Garh Phuphand near Fyzabad. Tradition relates that the latter, while a prisoner at Delhi for some offence was allowed to wrestle with a famous athlete, overthrew him and so pleased Shah Jahan that he was given his freedom and the *jagirs* on condition of becoming a Muhammadan. This he did and his descendants were first called Mallik, then Diwan and finally Khan.

The Collertorate records show that one Shahamat Ali Khan held Manjhi and other villages as *nankar* as late as 1835, when they were attached or resumed, and resettled with him and one Bibi Azimat as *nizamat* land.

Being situated on the sacred bank of the river Sarju (Gogra) Manjhi has attained religious sanctity. A huge congregation of pilgrims assemble on the *Kartik Purnima* day to have a dip in the sacred water of the river Sarju. A fair is held on this occasion. At Manjhi there are a post office, a police-station, a high school and a library. Manjhi is also one of the Blocks of the district under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

Manjhi is said to be connected with Baba Dharnidas a great saint and humanitarian who is supposed to be the contemporary of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. Very little is known about him. He was a social reformer and his teachings are akin to the tenets of Kabirdas. He denounced idolatory and the evils of separation by caste system. He founded various *maths*. Manjhi and Sahnam *maths* are supposed to be established by his disciples. He was also said to be the author of two literary works *Sabbad Prakash* and *Prem Prakash* but unfortunately they are not available.

MARHOWRAH.—A village and police-station in the Sadar subdivision, situated 17 miles north-east of Chapra on the North-Eastern Railway. The village is also connected by a metalled road from Chapra. According to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 491 acres, number of occupied houses 265, population 2,948 consisting of 1,495 males and 1,453 females out of which 216 males and 28 females were literates. The village contains a post office, railway station, Block office, lower primary, upper primary, middle and high schools, a Government-managed technical school and a library and two allopathic dispensaries, one maintained by the District Board and the other by the Cawnpore Sugar Factory.

At Marhowrah we have the Cawnpore Sugar Factory, a distillery, Saran Engineering Works, and a concern manufacturing sweets. The Cawnpore Sugar Factory was establised in 1904 and is the oldest sugar factory of the district. The distillery was established in 1909. The Saran Engineering Workshop was established in 1921 and it manufactures machine parts and rollers required in the sugar mills. The C. C. E. Morton (India) established a sweet factory in 1929. About 1,500 labourers work throughout the year in the four industries while in the sugarcane crushing season the number of labourers comes to 2,500. All the industries have been concentrated and they form an industrial colony. The amenities include a club, canteen and a reading room.

There is a State Labour Welfare Centre (B) type under a Labour Welfare Officer. The centre provides the amenities of indoor and outdoor games. The labour colony at Marhowrah

provides quarters to 250 labourers. The housing problem is not acute in Marhowrah as the majority of the labourers are local.

The urban characteristics are almost absent in Marhowrah. The majority of the population of the village belong to agricultural classes because out of the total population of 2,946 in 1951, 2,218 were enumerated as agricultural and only 728 as non-agricultural. The houses are in blocks instead of in rows.

MIRGANJ.—Mirganj is a township in Gopalganj subdivision, situated 10 miles north-west of Siwan and nearly midway between it and Gopalganj. The population in 1921 was 4,576 as against 13,690 in 1951. It is a place of considerable commercial importance, being a centre at which grain from north and north-west is collected for export to Patna and elsewhere. Several Patna merchants have agents here, especially for linseed, cotton, *gur* and pulse. Being connected by both rail and metalled road it has considerable importance for trade. These commodities are sent to Mirganj market from the adjacent villages. It has a police-station, sub-registry office, post and telegraph office, primary and high schools, a large sugar mill, a distillery and a power house. The loop line from Siwan to Gorakhpur passes through Mirganj, where there is a station the name of which is Hathua. Hathua is only 2½ miles away. After the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, the Mirganj *bazar* which was formerly the property of the Hathua estate has vested in the State.

It is said that Mirganj was named after a saint Mir Saheb who lived there for a long time. There is an unconfirmed story that the forefather of the present Hathua Maharaj granted Mirganj to a *panda* or a priest of Gaya from whom it was later purchased by the high officials of the estate.

MUHAMMADPUR.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, 23 miles west of Chapra, on the bank of a small river which is tributary of the Gogra. The area of the village according to the census of 1951 was 2,873 acres, number of occupied houses 706, population 4,363 with 2,170 males and 2,193 females out of which 578 males and 71 females were literates. The village has a lower primary, upper primary, middle and high schools, a *gram panchayat* and a library. There are eight temples dedicated to Lord Siva. A grain market is held there twice a week, i.e., on Monday and Thursday. Trade is fairly brisk in the rainy season when the stream on which the village stands is full; at other times much of the trade is diverted to Ekma.

PAPAUR.—A village in the Siwan subdivision, about 3 miles east of Siwan. Dr. Hoey has given the following account:—" It represents a place of great antiquity, and must be the Pava where the goldsmith Kunda lived, when Buddha came thus far he went with his followers to the goldsmith's grove, and while there, he accepted an invitation to dine with the goldsmith, to whose house he went. There he was

served with the *sukara** which aggravated the symptoms developed at Veluva and gave his illness a fatal turn. This led him to resolve to push on to Kusinara, and he set out with Ananda in that direction". He adds that near the present homestead there are the remains of a more ancient habitation, from which he obtained some copper Indo-Bactrian coins. The name Papaur appears to be a corruption of Papapura or Pavapura, i.e., the sacred city (W. Hoey, *Identification of Kusinara, Vaisali and other places,* J. A. S. B. 1900). The present area of the village is 986 acres. In 1951 the number of occupied houses was 326, population 2,132 with 1,024 males and 1,108 females out of which 181 males and 3 females are literates. The village has a lower primary and upper primary schools.

PARSA.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, situated about 8 miles to the north-east of Ekma Railway Station on the Ekma-Sohagpur road. It is locally known as Babu's Parsa to distinguish it from another village of the same name, which has a police-station. It is a large village. In the *Survey and Settlement Operations* (1893—1901) it has been described as the largest upland village in the district comprising an area of 6½ square miles. It is still the largest upland village of Saran and according to the census of 1951 the area of the village was 4,253 acres, number of occupied houses 1,507 with a population of 8,013 consisting of 4,001 males and 4,012 females out of which 1,346 males and 232 females were literates. It has a lower primary school for boys and girls, an Urdu lower primary school, middle and a high school, a *gram panchayat* and a library. Parsa is famous for manufacture of brass metal. Before the passing of the Bihar Land Reforms Act, 1950, the village was in the zamindari of Hathua Raj and the Babus of Parsa but now it has vested in the State.

RAGHUNATHPUR.—A village and police-station of the Siwan subdivision, situated on the Siwan-Raghunathpur road. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 837 acres, number of occupied houses 448 with a population of 3,181 consisting of 1,576 males and 1,605 females out of which 248 males and 35 females were literates. It has a lower primary school for boys and girls, an upper primary school, a middle school, a high school, a Sanskrit *pathsala* and a basic school, *gram panchayat* and a library. There is a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

REVELGANJ (GODNA).—A town in the Sadar subdivision, situated on the northern bank of the Gogra. Its population in 1921 was 8,186 a decrease of no less than 5,229 since 1872. The largest

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* "This", says Dr. Hoey, " is not boar's flesh, but *sukara kanda*, hog's root, a bulbous root found chiefly in mound and jungles which I have seen Hindus eat with avidity. It is *phalahar*, permissible to eat on fast days". Dr. Hoey does not appear to be very correct. Later researches indicate it was a poisonous mushroom. (P. C. R. C.)

drop occurred between 1871 (population 13,743) and 1901 (population 9,765). In 1931 its population was 8,812 while in 1941 it was 10,643 as against 11,321 in 1951.

The town runs from east to west and is closely built along the bank of the Gogra which in the rains is as much as a mile in breadth. Regarding Revelganj the last District Gazetteer published in 1930, mentions as follows :—

"The present *bazar* was built by Mr. Revel, Collector of Customs, in 1788. On the 9th July in that year, he informed the Collector that he had selected a place on the bank of the river, where he intended to establish a *chauki* to collect the dues. Six years later, we find the place described as follows by Mr. Twining who was passing up the Ganges with the Commander-in-chief, Sir Robert Abercromby :—'At the junction of the Gogra with the Ganges the East India Company have a Custom House. The Custom-master had a handsome house close to the shore, from which he came to pay his respects to the General, offering to send him anything his station afforded. On his return he sent a boat after us with fruit and vegetables. Amongst the former were some fine grapes, the first I had seen in India. This gentleman's name was Revel '.* His house and tomb close to the river bank are still pointed out, and his memory is held in such repute that his tomb is considered a shrine and his name invoked on occasions of calamity or adversity. The tomb which stands in front of the Eden *bazar* alongside the Chapra-Guthni road, was covered with a canopy and an inscription in marble was put in 1883, by the late Rai Tarapada Mukherjee Bahadur, Vice-Chairman of the Municipality, acting on the suggestion of Sir Ashley Eden, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. The inscription runs as follows :—'In this grave lies Henry Revel, Collector of Customs, under the East India Company, from whom the town of Revelganj derives its name. He had just established a Custom *chauki* at the neighbouring *bazar* of Semaria in 1788, and during a long residence close to the spot he succeeded in gaining the esteem and affection of the surrounding people, who raised this tomb over his remains, and whose descendants still cherish his memory with religious veneration'. A fair is held here twice a year in *Kartik* and *Chait*. In the same garden is the tomb of Major George Burgoyne, who died at Revelganj in 1846 while on his way to join at Chinsura as Commanding Officer; his epitaph states

* T. Twining, *Travels in India a hundred years ago*, 1893.

that his death was caused by fatigue and exposure during the campaign of the Sutlej and the battle of Sobraon."

Revelganj was the principal mart of Saran in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Regarding Revelganj, Hunter mentions in the *Statistical Account of Bengal,* published in 1877, that "The town has a favourable situation a mile above the junction of the Ghangra with the Ganges, and carries on a great trade on both sites. Its commerce may be considered under two heads; firstly its imports and exports, as the port of Saran, representing also Champaran and Nepal; and secondly its through trade between Bengal and the North-West, which is far the more important of the two (1) Local trade—The principal articles of export are maize (*china*), barley (*jao*), peas (*matar*), oilseeds (*tilhan*), saltpetre (*shora*) and sugar (*chini*); while rice (*chaul*), salt (*nimak*) and piece goods are largely imported (2) Through trade—Revelganj is the great changing station, where the boats from Lower Bengal tranship their cargoes of rice and salt to the Faizabad and Gorakhpur boats, which give in exchange wheat, barley, oilseeds, and pulses of various sorts. Oilseeds appear as one of the largest exports from Revelganj; but from the small area cultivated with oilseeds in Saran, it is more than probable that most of these are simply transhipped cargoes from the Upper Provinces. The Godna or Revelganj saltpertre was formerly much esteemed. Some Calcutta firms have representatives in Revelganj. The great bulk of the down country trade is with Calcutta and Patna, which places can be reached in the rains in fifteen and two days, respectively. Comparatively little goes to Calcutta by rail from Patna, as the cost to the transhipment to the railway, and the subsequent charges for carriage would considerably exceed the extremely low rate at which country boats carry downstream cargoes. The charge from Revelganj to Calcutta per maund is only 2½ annas to 2¾ annas, or from about 8 *s*. 6 *d* to 9 *s*. 4 *d*. a ton, while the charge to Patna is one anna per maund or about 3 *s*. 4 *d*. a ton. The practice of insuring the cargo (*bem*) which is commonly practised in the North-West, is considered impious by the Revelganj *mahajan*. An attempt has been made to start a steamer from Revelganj to Patna but the enterprise failed".

Revelganj owed its origin and importance to the fact that formerly it commanded the junction of the Gogra and the Ganga. The Custom House at Revelganj in the nineteenth century controlled the trade of Nepal and through the river upland down to a considerable degree. Its commercial decay, which began when the point of confluence of these two rivers shifted to the east, was hastened by the Gogra also setting towards the opposite bank and completed by railway competition. The town is now moribund as a trading centre and of little more than local importance.

The older name of the place is Godna. It is regarded locally as the traditional residence or *asram* of Gautama, the founder of the

school of *Nyaya* philosophy. Here it is said, he lived with his wife Ahalya in the days of Rama Chandra who visited him on his way to Janakpur. The legend is that Indra became enamoured of Ahalya and visited her in the guise of her husband. Gautama saw him as he left her room and cursed him with perpetual loss of virility. Ahalya was changed into a stone till Rama should come and deliver her. Rama did it on his way to Janakpur with Lakshman and Vishwamitra. A shrine has been built on the spot where Gautama's hut is believed to have stood. In commemoration of his connection with the place a Sanskrit school was built by public subscription between the years 1883 and 1887. The foundation-stone was laid by Sir Rivers Thompson, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. and the school was called after him the Thompson Gautama Pathsala. It teaches *Nyaya* philosophy and Sanskrit literature.

Popular tradition says that the name of Godna is derived from, and is a corruption of, the name of this Gautama; but this may perhaps be only a modern adaptation of a Buddhist tradition and it may possibly have referred originally to Gautama Buddha crossing over from Pataliputra on his way to Kusinara.

Revelganj has a municipality, police-station, high school, primary school and an *Islamia madarsa.* A fair is held on the *Kartik Purnima* day. Manufactured goods, agricultural products and cattle are sold in this *mela.* A visit to Revelganj reminds one of the past glorious days of the place.

SARAN KHAS.—A village in the Sadar subdivision 25 miles north-east of Chapra and 16 miles north of Manjhi. Regarding it the last District Gazetteer, published in 1930, mentions as follows :—

> " It contains extensive ancient remains now covered for the most part by cultivated fields, of which Dr. Hoey has given the following account:—' There is an abrupt rise at Makdum Shah's *dargah,* a little south of Harpur, which continues for a couple of miles south till it terminates somewhat more abruptly beyond Khwaja Pir's *Mazar.* On the east of this elevated site runs a stream known locally by two names, Gandaki and Sarju. This is well defined and may have been a channel made in ancient days for water-supply. West of this and parallel to it, the high ground extends for an average width of not less than half a mile. As I passed from the northern end, I observed undulations with occasional very prominent heights, and noticed that cultivators have taken out numerous bricks while ploughing. On approaching the southern end I observed a pile near a mound, on which are the remains of a brick building. I learnt that this pile is the Ganj-i-Shahi-dan or martyr's heap near the traditional Raja's *kot.* This indicates a desperate assault at some time on a Hindu stronghold.

Further on, I came on Khwaja Pir's *Mazar,* and two tombs on an open enclosure. In one corner there was a large black stone about 41 feet long, on which I observed Hindu sculptures of the Navagraha or nine planets. On the back of the slab there was a long inscription in Tughra character, of which I had not then the means of taking a rubbing. It is much worn and could not be read at sight. It is probably historically important. A few miles west by north of Saran Khas is a village called Bhikaband on the map. I visited this spot also, and found that there is here a large banyan tree, which is said to cover about ten acres. In the ground near there are brick remains and an old well lately re-opened. Somewhat south-east of this is an old temple and the attendant Brahmans wrote the name for me : Bhikaban, which is clearly the ' Bhikshu's Grove '. About a mile west of this are two villages bearing the name Kapia, which suggests the story of the service rendered to Buddha by the monkey *(kapi)* as mentioned by the later Chinese traveller. (W. Hoe, *Identification of Kusinara, Vaisali and other places,* J. A. S. B., 1900.) "

The place is neglected from archæological point of view. There has been no further investigation.

SEMARIA.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, 7 miles west of Chapra. The area of the village in 1951 was 373 acres, number of the occupied houses 140, population 1,107 with 539 males and 568 females out of which 146 males and 30 females are literates. It has a lower and upper primary schools. Originally, it is said that the place was at the junction of the Ganga and Gogra or Sarju rivers and was thus a sacred site to which Hindus come to bathe in large numbers. The two rivers now meet at some distance away, but a fair is still held in November every year on the same date as the Sonepur fair. It is largely attended by women and next to the Sonepur fair is the largest cattle fair in the district. The great Hindu sage, Data Traya, who had 24 *gurus,* is said to have lived here, and close by is Gautama Rishi's *asthan* or residence where a temple has been built.

SILHAURI.—A village in the Sadar subdivision, 2 miles north of Mirzapur. The area of the village in 1951 was 609 acres, number of occupied houses 105, population 1,727 with 859 males and 868 females, out of which 299 males and 8 females were literates. It has a library and a lower primary school. There is a temple of Mahadeo (Siva). According to legend, a cultivator discovered a stone from the top of which blood oozed out where it had been cut by his *kodali.* The cultivator informed the villagers of the miracle and they all tried to take out the stone, but the deeper they dug the larger was the stone found to be. So they gave up the attempt, but at night

they dreamed that it was not a stone but the god Siva, by name Silanath. A temple was then built on the spot and the god received their worship. A fair lasting about a week is held here twice a year in February and April, when people flock in from great distance to worship the god and to sell and buy cattle and miscellaneous goods.

SITALPUR.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated near Manjhi. In 1951 the area of the village was 756 acres, number of occupied houses 294 with a population of 1,943 consisting of 875 males and 1,068 females out of which 258 males and 71 females were literates. It has a *gram panchayat,* a lower primary, upper primary and a middle schools. There is a small market where people purchase essential commodities. There was a sugar mill at this village for a number of years. Owing to adverse circumstances in getting supply the sugar mill was transferred to Garaul in Sadar subdivision of Muzaffarpur district.

SISWAN.—A village in the Siwan subdivision, 21 miles south of Siwan. The area of the village in 1951 was 898 acres, number of occupied houses 195, population 1,670 consisting of 757 males and 913 females out of which 231 males and 48 females were literates. It has a police-station, a post office and telegraph office, a district board bungalow and a lower primary school. At village Mahendra near Siswan there is a temple of Lord Siva which is visited by the people of the locality on the *Sivaratri* day. Siswan is a good market. There is also a ferry on the river Gogra. It has a Block office under a Block Development Officer.

SIWAN.—Headquarters of the subdivision of the same name. The population of the town is given below in a tabular form :—

Years.	Population.
1881	13,319
1891	17,709
1901	15,756
1911	12,472
1921	11,862
1931	14,215
1941	18,386
1951	22,625

The decrease in population during the censuses of 1891, 1901, 1911 and 1921 was partly due to plague and partly due to a virulent type of fever which was prevalent in 1903, 1905, 1909 and 1910. The town has the Subdivisional Officer's court building, Munsif's court, a sub-registry office, police-station, municipality and a Degree college. A branch of the Church known as Regions Beyond Mission was established in 1902. The place is also known as Aliganj Siwan and the railway station is called Savan. It is a junction of the North-Eastern Railway.

Siwan is situated on the east bank of the river Daha which is navigable in the rains. It is about 40 miles north-west of Chapra with which it is connected by a good road and the railway. It has a reputation for the manufacture of superior pottery and brass work. The pottery is red or black-glazed or unglazed and porous and is ornamented with patterns in gold and silver. The town is also known for the manufacture of articles made of a certain white metal called *phul,* which is composed of copper and spelter with a small admixture of zinc.

Siwan is the centre of a large trade which has increased after the advent of the railway. It has a district board dak bungalow as well as two P. W. D. inspection bungalows and a *sarai* or public rest-house erected by public subscription in 1887 to commemorate the Jubilee of Queen Victoria.

Dr. Hoey is of opinion that "Siwan is identical with Kusinara, the scene of Buddha's death. He states that Buddha visited Pava, the modern Papaur, where the goldsmith Kunda lived and was there served with *sukara,* a bulbous root and not boar's flesh, as tradition usually asserts, which gave his illness a fatal turn". Dr. Hoey then goes on to say :—"This led him to resolve to push on to Kusinara, and he set out with Ananda in that direction. He was then at least 80 years' old and suffering from dysentery. He could not have travelled far, and we observe that the *Mahaparinirbhana Sutta* represents him as halting under a tree at least once and reaching a river with difficulty. The salient points in connection with his last brief journey are that he left Pava, halted under a tree, moved on again to a stream called Kakuttha, and having crossed a river bearing a name suggestive of gold he reached the people's park near Kusinara and lay under some *sal* trees. Possibly he had not come to Kusinara because he sent Ananda to bring the Mallas to him. After his death there was an imposing ceremony to do honour to his remains. He was laid out on a golden bier and is said to have been kept for seven days; and it is said that he showed his feet from out his winding sheet, and he even raised himself and spoke. There was difficulty in removing his remains until Kasyapa came. Thus the spot where his bier rested was one that must have borne a name associated with it. That name is Siwan, the Sanskrit *Savayana,* a litter or bier. There is something in names. It is remarkable that we have a particular tree of great age at a mound near Siwan Railway Station. This is known as Jagattra, the Protector or Deliverer of the world. One would expect Hindus to venerate this spot but they do not. They consider it ill-omened. The late Raja of Hathwa desired to enclose all this spot, but the Pandits told him that the act would bring him bad luck. He enclosed a large patch, but left the tree outside the walls. He died soon afterwards. This Jagattra is looked upon as the oldest place about Siwan, and its name and associations are significant. There is also a high mound not far off, which has not been explored. I can have no doubt that Kusinara lies somewhere

close to Siwan, if it be not Siwan itself"* (W. Hoey, *Identification of Kusinara, Vaisali and other places,* J. A. S. B., 1900.) The tree mentioned by Dr. Hoey has now fallen down. The local legend is that two Sheikhs saved the state of Majhauli from some enemy during the absence of the Raja and he gave them land near Bhantapokhar. Soon after they invaded the fort of Raja Jagattra who was defeated and slain. As his spirit haunted his conquerors, they consulted a *fakir* who told them to grant lands to Brahmins and *fakirs*. The mound marks the spot where Raja Jagattra was beheaded. The late Mr. Devendra Nath Dutt, Diwan, in his book on Hathua Raj refutes the facts and inference of Dr. Hoey. According to him, the late Maharaja purchased a small plot of land in 1888 in order to build a small rest-house near Siwan Railway Station; he was unable to lease or purchase more lands round the spot and consequently the plot purchased was enclosed with a masonry wall in 1889 and used as a place for pitching tents. The Maharaja died more than seven years after the land was enclosed There is a Brahmasthan and also a Kalisthan close by, such as are common in Bihar, and there is, in his opinion, nothing to connect them with the Buddhist Jagattra.

Considering that Siwan was already a town in 1881 with a population of 13,319 it may be said that the index of urbanisation has been extremely slow. The population of Siwan in 1951, namely, 22,625 souls indicates this. The population statistics mentioned elsewhere will further show that there was practically very little growth of population during the five decades between 1881 and 1921. It is only since 1931 that the town has been expanding.

Siwan has a municipality with a small income and depends on the State grants to make up the deficit. The amenities offered are small. As Siwan has just started developing it could have been better if there was a planned scheme for the expansion of the town. There is no such scheme and the town is allowed to develop in a haphazard manner. There is very little of beauty in the town which has no park or garden or attractive arboriculture. The town has possibility for developing engineering concerns, a nut, bolt and rivet factory or for a re-rolling mill.

SIWAN SUBDIVISION.—Central subdivision of the district has an area of 849 square miles. The subdivision is bounded on the west by the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh, on the north and north-west by the Gopalganj subdivision, on the east and south-east by the Sadar subdivision, and on the south by the river Gogra extending from Dumrahar (near Guthni) to Siswan. It forms an alluvial tract intersected by numerous rivers and water channels, the most important of which are tributaries of the Gogra, namely, the Jharahi and Daha. Other rivers in the subdivision are the

* This theory of Dr. Hoey has not been supported by modern research (P. C. R. C.).

Gandaki and Dhanai, which enter it at Madhopur and Barhoga, respectively and flow through it in a south-easterly direction. The population in 1911 was 7,58,351, in 1921 7,75,536, 8,24,853 in 1931, 9,64,073 in 1941 and 10,75,984 in 1951. Its density in 1941 was 1,136 square miles as against 1,267 in 1951. It has one town, Siwan, and 1,409 villages. The subdivision was created in 1848.

SONEPUR.—A village and police-station in the Sadar subdivision situated on the right bank of the Gandak close to its confluence with the Ganga. The place had earned a great reputation on account of a very large fair held in the month of *Kartik* and which is said to be the largest cattle fair in Asia.

The legend connected with the place is that it was the actual place at which in pre-historic times, the fight ended between the lords of the forest and the water, *Gaj* and *Grah*—the elephant and the crocodile. According to the *Srimad Bhagabat Puran*, there was in olden times a vast lake round the Trikut hill, which had as the name implies, three towering peaks, crowned with dense forest and infested with wild animals. In this lake lived a crocodile of enormous size, and one day when a huge elephant came with a herd to bathe there, the crocodile caught him by the leg and tried to drag him into deeper water. The struggle continued for thousands of years, all the elephants and crocodiles joining in the contest. At last, the elephant, beginning to weaken, prayed to the supreme god Hari, to help him. His prayer was heard and Hari saved him from the grip of the crocodile in the presence of Hara and other gods.

According to Hindu mythology, the crocodile had in former life been a Gandharva chief, named Huhu, who came to bathe in this lake with a party of Gandharva women, and in playful sport caught by the leg a holy sage, named Dewala Muni, who had also come to bathe there. Enraged at the arrogant misbehaviour, the sage cursed the Gandharva chief to take the shape of a crocodile as a punishment. Thence forward he lived in the lake in the repulsive form of a crocodile until he was restored to his Gandharva life by the sacred touch of Vishnu (Hari), who with his discus (*Chakra*) cut the throat of the crocodile while delivering the elephant from his jaws. The elephant was, on the other hand, in the former existence, a king of Pandyas, Indradyumna by name, who was a very pious man of contemplative turn of mind. One day, unfortunately, he could not pay the mark of respect to a powerful sage, Agastya, as his mind was absorbed in deep meditation. The sage took it otherwise as a wilful disrespect to him, so he cursed him to assume the form of an elephant. He, too, after long suffering, was saved by Hari in the manner described, and was allowed to accompany him to the high heaven of *Baikuntha*.

Antiquity of Sonepur.

Though the *Bhagwat Puran* ascribes the incident pre-historic, but historically speaking, it is purely a myth. The sacred river

Sadanira (Gandak) on the bank of which Sonepur is situated, does not cover the list of the rivers mentioned in the *Rig Veda*. It is surmised by some that Sonepur-Hajipur was an integral part of the Vrijjian Republic. It is also attributed that the area of Sonepur-Hajipur remained for long under the influence of *Vratyas* or Kikatas who were famous for their wealth in kine. Considering the strategic position of Sonepur and hostile relation of Ajatsatru with the Lichchivian, it is presumed that area formed part of Magadha during its ascendancy. In Buddhist and Jain literature Sonepur does not directly come, but in the 'Records of Buddhist Religion" there is mention of the existence of a *Sangharam* on the confluence of the Mahi and Sagar which were either small rivulets or tributaries to the Gandak.

In the Kali-Mandir of Sonepur there is a stone pillar of Sunga period. Some statues of Gupta and Pala period have been recently found. In the "Travels" of Fa-Hian and Hieun Tsiang there is no mention of a place like Hari-Har Kshetra (Sonepur). But Fa-Hian after Vaisali *en route* to Magadha after going four *Yojanas** east came at the confluence of the five rivers; and after crossing the river, and going south one Yojana, he reached Magadha and the town of Pataliputra† (Palin-fu). Considering the distance of one *Yojana* and the direction mentioned above one has to speculate that Fa-Hian traversed Sonepur region to reach Pataliputra. But so long the former description of four *Yojanas* east from Vaisali and the confluence of five rivers are not ascertained by the scholars, it would be more a speculation. We have seen the names of the rivers Gandak, Mahi, Sagar and the Ganga in this region during the period under review, but even the existence of these four rivers does not make the confluence of five rivers as mentioned before. But there are enough materials to prove that Pataliputra was situated on the confluence of the rivers Hiranyabaho (Sone) and the sacred Ganga. In the light of these facts there may be a valid speculation that Fa-Hian came to Sonepur region *en route* to Pataliputra; but this question cannot finally settle until new evidence appears.

Temple of Harihar Nath.

A temple, it is said by orthodox Hindus, was built by Ram when on his way to Janakpur to win Sita. When this temple came into existence is still a puzzle to scholars. There is a stray reference of the temple of Harihar Nath during the Subedarship of Raja Man Singh who is said to have done repair work. The present temple was built by Raja Ram Narain, a noted figure of Bihar during the later Mughal period and the recent expension work of the temple is done by Birla brothers. The temple of Harihar Nath Mahadeo is the principal place of worship but several smaller temples also receive the offerings of pilgrims. Among these are the Kali *Ashthan*

* S. Beal's *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, page LIV.

† *Ibid*, page LV.

and the Panch Devata *Mandir;* the latter was formerly presided over by a priestess who claimed to have built the temple with the offerings she received.

Sonepur is considered a place of exceptional holiness and the Ganga *asnan* or ceremonial bathing in the Ganga is held by the orthodox Hindus to be unusually efficacious. But the great attraction of the place is the fair which is held during Ganga *asnan*. It lasts for about a fortnight but is at its height for two days before and two days after the bathing in the Ganga on the day of the full moon (*Kartik Purnamasi*). Immense crowds assemble, the number of which it is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy. The roads leading to Sonepur are thronged for days and in spite of many special trains being provided by the railway authorities, they are crammed. Goods of a very great variety and origin are sold at the fair, and also a large number of cattle, horses and elephants; it is in fact one of the largest cattle markets of the wórld.

The period of the inception of the fair, like the temple is shrouded in obscurity. Previously the fair was held at Hajipur (Ramchaura) and only oblation was offered to the deity at Sonepur. The fair at Sonepur appears to have come into prominence during the reign of Aurangzeb, as an European traveller Marshall had mentioned that even the traders of the far-flung *Tatar desh* used to come in the fair to deal in commerce.

In former years the fair was the occasion of a large social and sporting gathering of Europeans. The Sonepur fair was much patronised by the European indigo planters of the nineteenth century. A large camp was held in a magnificent grove and the visitors amused themselves with racing, polo, gymkhanas, tennis, dances and visits to the fair which presents Indian life under many interesting aspects. These European planters did much for the expansion of communication. The absence of crime mentioned in the old correspondence volumes at Saran Record Room during *mela* period is an eloquent testimony of the administrative efficiency and keen co-operation of the public.

There is a description of Sonepur fair by M. Wilson in his *Memoir on Bihar*, which was written a century before. In 1852, he was an Assistant Manager of Karhaul factory. His observations on some of the pathetic and touching sights on the bank of the river on the *Kartik Purnima* day still hold good. Wilson has written that one could buy from the canvas-made-shop the commodities of Manchester, Buckingham, Delhi, Kanpur, Afghanistan, and Kashmir, etc. He has also made reference that *hookah* smoking was prevalent among the European planters and also their fondness of riding in the palanquins.

The old correspondence volumes of Saran indicate that the fair of Sonepur has given a great impetus to the indigenous cottage industries and trade and commerce. It would not be an exaggeration

to mention here that one can have the sight of the common wares of the world market in this small hamlet of Sonepur.

The investiture ceremony of *Khillaut* of Rana Jang Bahadur of Nepal conferred by Lord Mayo amidst the galaxy of big men for his service and loyalty to the Government during the Mutiny (1857) is a great event in the history of the Sonepur fair. Lord Northbrook's visit to Sonepur fair during his viceroyalty is also a significant event. On various occasions during the nineteenth century a social gathering of big men assembled at the fair to discuss the significant political and social matters of the country. In such a social gathering just preceding the movement of 1857, Babu Kuer Singh of Jagdishpur is said to have hatched a plan with other big men of the country to overthrow the British Government.

Sonepur is a big village. According to the census of 1951 the total number of occupied houses was 758 with a total population of 5,215 only consisting of 2,778 males and 2,437 females out of which 1,348 males and 125 females were literate. It has a lower primary, upper primary, middle, high school and a Sanskrit *Pathsala,* a *gram panchayat* and a library. The name of the library is *Abha Pustakalaya* and has earned reputation in the district. There is also a post and telegraph office, police-station, sub-registry office and a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer. It has a district board inspection bungalow.

Due to the salutary climate, abundance of milk and plantains in the area, the inhabitants of Sonepur are compararively free from mal-nutritous diseases. The fair which is responsible for the economic prosperity and prestige to this region, has brought in its train some evils and certain amount of filth during *mela* time. A few years before, the fair was a notorious place for prostitution; but the enactment of "Immoral Traffic Act" has done away with this social evil. Special sanitary precautions are taken at the time of the fair to prevent the outbreak of an epidemic and arrangements for the supply and distribution of good water are made. There is a water tower which supplies water in the *mela* area.

Sonepur is also an important junction on the North-Eastern Railway, being a district headquarters of the Traffic and Locomotive Departments. There are large railway workshops and a number of quarters for employees. The Railway colony has a Recreation Club. Close by is the Gandak railway bridge which was opened by the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, in March, 1887. It is 2,176 feet long, is built of eight spans of 250 feet and has two broad pathways for foot passengers. In consequence of the great rapidity of the Gandak when in flood and of the unstable nature of its bed, the bridge was regarded as a triumph of engineering skill. But this bridge has outlived its existence and found to be unserviceable for heavy traffic. Another magnificent railway bridge at some distance from the old bridge is under construction to replace it and will soon open for traffic.

There is a proposal to hand over the old bridge to the State Government for road traffic. Sonepur is now connected with Hajipur by a pontoon bridge which is dismantled during the floods. Sonepur was the longest platform in the world, being 2,415 feet in length, but it lost the first place in 1950 and its place is now taken by Storvik, a station in Sweden, the length being 2,470 feet.

The statistical figures of livestock of the fair from 1920 to 1958-59 are given below :—

Years.		Horse and ponies.	Cows.	Buffaloes.	Bullock and calves.	Elephant.
1		2	3	4	5	6
1920—30	..	7,160	2,030	1,510	3,63,300	735
1931—40	..	47,149	11,621	5,808	2,89,077	6,080
1941—50	..	22,232	5,604	7,305	3,33,000	7,042
1950-51	..	950	780	600	50,000	750
1951-52	..	755	580	700	50,850	800
1952-53	..	400	925	800	47,050	300
1953-54	..	1,108	995	600	45,050	300
1954-55	..	913	1,169	959	58,094	390
1955-56	..	1,306	1,337	1,075	71,700	428
1956-57	..	1,475	1,375	1,100	65,617	425
1957-58	..	1,365	1,505	954	62,372	468
1958-59	..	2,500	2,125	1,675	79,500	500

THAWE.—A village in Gopalganj subdivision, situated 4 miles south of Gopalganj. It is a junction station of the North-Eastern Railway of the Masrakh Thawe section and the Siwan-Gorakhpur loop. In the village there are remains of an old fort but the history of the fort is obscure. The Hathua Raja had a palace there but it is now in decadent state. Close by the residence of the Hathua Raja there is an old temple dedicated to the goddess Durga. Within the enclosure of the temple there is a peculiar tree, the botanical family of which has not yet been identified. The tree has grown up like the cross. Various legends are prevalent in connection with the idol and the tree. Food for jackals is still offered in the nearby jungle and a big fair is annually held in the month of *Chait* (March-April).

TAJPUR.—A village in the Sadar subdivision situated near Manjhi. In 1951 the area of the village was 1,317 acres, number of occupied houses 326 with a population of 2,521 consisting of 1,166

males and 1,355 females out of which 349 males and 37 females were literates. It has a post office, library, *gram panchayat*, a lower primary, middle, high and a Sanskrit school. The village has a small market where essential commodities can be procured.

UCHKAGAON.—A village in the Gopalganj subdivision under Mirganj police-station. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 1,146 acres, number of occupied houses 217 with a population of 1,782 consisting of 817 males and 965 females out of which 145 males and 28 females were literate. The village has a lower primary and a middle schools. It has a Block office under the administrative control of a Block Development Officer.

ZIRADAI.—A growing village in the Siwan subdivision. The area of the village in the census of 1951 was 388 acres, number of occupied houses 151, population 1,155 with 548 males and 607 females, out of which 142 males and 23 females were literates. The village is connected by a metalled road. It has a high school, middle school and a lower primary school and a post and telegraph office. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Indian Republic, belongs to this village.

Enclosures

ENCLOSURE NO. I.

*Rents, Wages and Prices.**

CASH RENTS.

Cash rents are almost universal, only 4 per cent of the holdings of settled and occupancy *ryots*, which account for nearly 85 per cent of the total number of holdings, paying produce rents. The average rate of rent is higher than in any other district in North Bihar, and is also higher than in the neighbouring districts of the United Provinces. Rents generally rule lower in the north of the district; and the southern part, where the pressure of population is greatest and cultivation most advanced, is mainly responsible for the high rates prevailing. The following table shows the average incidence of the rents recorded at the last settlement for different classes of *ryots* '—

Class of *ryots*.		Area in acres.	Rent in rupees.	Rate per acre.		
				Rs.	a.	p.
Ryots at fixed rates	..	9,340	30,840	3	4	9
Settled or occupancy *ryots*	..	11,02,382	47.76,731	4	5	4
Non-occupancy *ryots*	.	14,185	71,339	5	0	6
Total	..	11,25,907	48,78,900	4	5	4

It will be observed that nearly the whole of the rental of the district is paid by settled and occupancy *ryots*, only one lakh being payable by *ryots* at fixed rates and by non-occupancy *ryots*. The rents paid by settled and occupancy *ryots* are highest in Sonepur and Chapra thanas, where the average is Rs. 5-8-7 and Rs. 5-6-4 per acre, respectively; Sonepur being a densely populated thana, while the rate for Chapra is raised by the high rents paid for garden lands in the neighbourhood of the town. *Ryots* at fixed rates pay the lowest rents in Darauli and Manjhi thanas, which contain a large number of *bhekhbirits* or resumed rent-free grants, and the highest rents in Basantpur thana, mainly because it contains some villages with rich and fertile soil in which valuable crops are grown. The rent rate of non-occupancy *ryots* is considerably higher than that of occupancy *ryots*; and as might be expected under-*ryots* pay the highest rent rate of all, for though, in some villages, they have proved that they acquire occupancy rights by custom, the majority are merely tenants-at-will and allow the superior *ryot* to exact what terms he pleases

Enhancement of rent.

At the assessment made by the orders of Akbar at the end of the sixteenth century, an all-round rate of about Rs. 1-8-0 per acre

* Reprint of the text of Chapter VII in the *Disrtict Gazetteer of Saran*, 1908.

was imposed. For 220 years after Akbar's settlement no satisfactory evidence as to rent rates is forthcoming, but it appears that in the beginning of the nineteenth century the rate was over Re. 1 an acre in the northern part of the district, which was in an unsettled state, and between Rs. 2 and Rs. 4 in the rest of the district, though the rates for good lands capable of bearing special crops were three or four times as much as this. Forty years later a rent rate of Rs. 2-6-0 was paid in the villages subject to resumption, but there are good grounds for believing that the rate for the district, as a whole, was a good deal higher than this. Finally, in 1870 we find that a rate of Rs. 4-14-0 per acre prevailed in the area held by the Hathwa Raj, as a result of three enhancements made in the preceding 20 years; and it is certain that most of the other landlords must have raised their demands to an even greater extent. It is known that, in the estates of petty landlords, enhancements were going on up to the commencement of the recent settlement proceedings; and there can be no doubt that it has only been owing to the provisions of the Tenancy Act, enabling the Settlement Officers to disregard illegal enhancements, that the result of the recent settlement has been such a comparatively moderate rent rate as Rs. 4-5-0 per acre for the district as a whole.

As regards the methods of enhancement which have been usually resorted to by petty proprietors, the partition of estates under the old Partition Act has been a frequent cause of, or excuse for, enhancement. At the conclusion of the proceedings under that Act, the proprietor of each newly-formed estate found himself in possession of what were practically new holdings and had to write up entirely fresh rent-rolls, with little to guide him, even if he desired guidance, as to the previous rent rate or as to what would be a fair rental for the area comprised within the new estate. Small wonder then that he often cut the knot by levying an entirely new and enhanced rate, to which the *ryots* generally agreed in order to save themselves from trouble. Government sales for arrears of revenue have also been almost invariably followed by an enhancement of rent, and the *ryots* have seldom made any effort to resist this, the belief being universal that the purchaser starts with a *tabula rasa*, and can levy any rent he likes.

In many cases enhancements take place for no apparent reason. and are then generally resisted by the *ryots* at least for a time. There are two common methods of overcoming this resistance. One is for the landlord to prepare a set of false rent-rolls, extending over a number of years, showing the enhanced rents which he claims, and then to institute suits for arrears of rent against a few *ryots*. If these *ryots* can be induced to allow a collusive decree to be passed, so much the better; but if not, the *ryots* have generally no receipts or rebutting evidence, and the landlord wins his case. The rest of the village is then cowed into submission. If, on the other hand, the landlord is unwilling to incur the odium of raising rents, he lets out his estate

to a tenure-holder for a term of years, giving him an enhanced rent-roll to work on. The tenure-holder knows that his connection with the village is a temporary one, and is not too scrupulous as to the methods he adopts for bringing the *ryots* to terms. He is thus frequently able to hand the village back to the proprietor with a greatly enhanced rent-roll.

PRODUCE RENTS.

Produce rents are of three kinds,--*batai*, *bhaoli* and *mankhap*. Under the *batai* system the actual crop is divided either in the field or on the threshing floor. Under the *bhaoli* system, the value of the crop is appraised on the field before it is cut, and the *ryot* pays his share to the landlord either in kind or in cash after the harvest. Where the *mankhap* system prevails, the ryot has to pay a certain number of maunds per *bigha* to the landlord, irrespective of the outturn. This system is seldom met with in Saran, and is extremely unpopular among the *ryots*, for the rate is generally so high as to leave the *ryot* only a small margin of profit in ordinary years, while in bad years he often has to make over the whole produce to his landlord. These disadvantages are not counterbalanced by the fact that in an extremely good year the *ryot* may be able to retain more of the produce than he would if he paid a *batai* rent; and on the whole, it may be said that the system has nothing to recommend it from the *ryot's* point of view. The *batai* system is the most common in Saran, and is sedulously fostered by the *gumashta* class, to whom it offers unlimited opportunities for pilfering. Further description of produce rents is hardly necessary, for they are of little importance in Saran. There can be little doubt that their rarity is a sign of agricultural development.

WAGES.

Masons in Chapra earn daily wages ranging from 4 annas to 5 annas 4 pies, and carpenters from 5 to 6 annas; in the interior, they are paid 2 annas and given two meals per diem, viz., half a seer of *sattu* at midday, and half a seer of rice or barley flour in the evening, with perhaps an allowance of *dal*. Labourers are paid 2 annas a day in Chapra, and 6 Gorakhpuri pice with half a seer of *sattu* outside the town; women get 1½ annas, and boys 1 to 1½ anna in Chapra, and in the country 6 Gorakhpuri pice. A house-builder gets 3 to 4 annas in Chapra, blacksmiths from 4 to 6 annas and Nunias 4 annas, the corresponding wages in the interior being 2 annas in the first two cases and 8 Gorakhpuri pice in the last. Cooks and house servants get Re. 1 to Rs. 2, besides daily food and two pieces of cloth in a year. A cart-driver gets Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2, in addition to his daily food and two cloths a year. A *sais* or groom gets Rs. 5 to Rs. 7 per mensem, and a sweeper from 8 annas to Rs. 2 per mensem; a barber receives one pice for shaving and a washerman 4 to 6 annas per score of clothes washed. In the villages, however, barbers

and washermen are paid annually at the rate of two *paseris* (10 seers) of grain per head, excluding unmarried boys and girls.

The wages both of village artisans and of field labourers are generally paid in kind. An ordinary full day's wage for digging is three local seers of grain and one seer of *sattu*; the grain and *sattu* are always the cheapest kind available, and in an ordinary year their money value would be rather less than 2 annas. The wages of the hired ploughman are the same as those of an ordinary labourer if he works the whole day, but, as a matter of fact, plouging is almost entirely done in the forenoon. The ordinary rate in the case of hired ploughs appears to work out to about 3 annas per diem. As a rule, however, the cultivators lend their ploughs to one another and do not need to hire ploughmen and ploughs. For transplanting, which is necessary only in the case of rice and *marua*, the rates are slightly higher than for ordinary agricultural labour, but their money value hardly exceeds 2 annas per diem; while the rate for weeding and for carting manure comes to only 1½ annas.

For harvesting, payment is nearly always made by giving the labourer a share of the produce, varying from one-sixteenth to one-twentieth. In the case of threshing, the cultivators rarely have any need to employ outside labour, as they act on a system of mutual aid; one cultivator lends his bullocks one day to his neighbour and gets his neighbour's bullocks the next day, the one condition being that the bullocks shall not be muzzled, i.e., the man whose crop is being threshed feeds the bullocks so long as he uses them. For threshing the landlord's crops a tenant has to lend his bullocks, getting little in return except their feed, and possibly a meal for himself, if he assists personally at the threshing.

Supply of Labour.

The cultivation of the *bhadoi*, *aghani* and *rabi* crops affords almost continuous work to labourers from about the end of May, when *tamni* or the preparation of the land for the *bhadoi* crops begins, until the end of October. From the beginning of November to the middle of March is the slack season for labour. In November and December labourers subsist on the produce of their own *bhadoi* fields and on any earnings they can get by working in those of their masters; and during the next 2½ months they live on what they earn from cutting paddy; even though they exchange the paddy they receive for yams and other cheap food, they often have difficulty in making both ends meet. At this time, however, there is a great exodus of labourers in search of employment, the coolies going in thousands to work in the fields, in the docks on the Hoogly, and on the railways, and returning for the agricultural operations which take place with the breaking of the monsoon. They usually borrow about Rs. 6 a head at 25 per cent to enable them to go to their work; if they get work, they generally send Rs. 6 or Rs. 8, or less, in January to their homes or to the money-lenders. If successful, they come

back by rail, bringing from Rs. 20 to Rs. 35 per man; those who fall sick and have no friends, walk back and may or may not reach their homes.

Regarding the general question of the supply of labour, the following extract is quoted from the Report on Labour in Bengal (1906), by Mr. Foley: "The pressure of the population on the soil is more felt in this district than in any other district of Bengal, and Saran is the first district in Bengal to come to the point where it cannot maintain its population. Hence, emigration is absolutely necessary, and, excluding certain districts from which tea gardens recruit, the numbers of emigrants are greater than from any other district in India. Saran supplies labour to all kinds of industries except the coal-mines, and the majority of the hands in the jute mills appear to come from this district. The chief exodus of labour from the district is in November and December, the coolies going by rail *via* Katihar to cut the crops in Eastern Bengal. They return in March, April, May, June or the beginning of July. During October and November a large amount of labour is available. There is some little difficulty in procuring labour in the district in July, August and March, but for the rest of the year it is plentiful. I believe the rates and conditions of work in Calcutta industries are well known in the district. There is a constant flow to and from the mills, and one man will inform a whole village as to what his earnings and work have been. The people of Saran I take it, are well aware of the benefits to be derived from employment in the industrial centres, and a larger number than from any other district seek employment in those centres spontaneously."

PRICES.

The rise (in seers and chittacks per rupee) of common rice, wheat, gram and salt during the last fortnight in March for the 15 years ending in 1905 is given below. The cheapening of salt during this period is attributed to the reduction of the salt tax:—

Years.			Common rice.	Wheat.	Gram	Salt.
			S. ch.	S. ch.	S. ch.	S. ch.
1891—1895	..	..	13 12½	12 12	17 14	10 13½
1896—1900	..	..	13 9	13 0	16 14	11 7
1901—1905	..	..	13 13	13 14	16 10	12 7

As regards the prices of foodgrains at different times of the year, prices are easy at the beginning of October, when the *bhadoi* crop is well in the market, but they rise sharply by the end of the month, no doubt owing to exportation; by the end of November they are again easier with the incoming of the great *aghani* rice crop, and then rise with more or less regularity till the end of February. In the month of March relief comes with the ingathering of the *rabi* harvest and prices fall till about the end of April or the middle of

May, when a rise commences once more, which continues till the early *bhadoi* crops come in towards the end of July. These crops are so cheap and plentiful, that the general average then falls sharply till the end of September.

The harvesting of each of the three great crops naturally ushers in a distinct fluctuation in prices. Grain is, on the whole, cheapest in September, just after the *bhadoi* is in; not quite so cheap early in May, when the *rabi* has all been gathered home; and less cheap at the end of November, when the rice reaches the market. Conversely, grains are dearest just before each of these three harvests is reaped, i.e., in October, February and July. It might have been thought that as rice is the largest and most important crop in the district, its advent would have had the greatest effect on the prices of food, but it must be remembered that, owing to the demand for exportation, rice is never a very cheap grain. The same consideration holds good in a less and still lesser degree as regards the *rabi* and the *bhadoi*, for this latter crop (except maize) is but little exported; in other words, and speaking generally, the influence of each crop on prices varies inversely with the demand upon it for exportation.

Famine Prices.

The maximum price of paddy during the famine of 1866 was Rs. 5-10-0 per standard maund and of rice Rs. 8 per maund; the highest price that rice reached in 1874 was 9 seers per rupee. In the famine of 1897 the price of rice rose to 9 seers in October, 1896, was as high as 8 seers a rupee in the second fortnight of May, and reached the maximum of 7½ seers per rupee during the second half of June. Maize started at 12 seers at the beginning of December, 1896, rose to 10½ seers in the first three months of 1897, and reached the highest price of 6½ seers at the end of June. The cheapest articles of food throughout the famine were *marua*, which, however, was only obtainable in small quantities, and barley. The former sold at 13 seers to 13½ seers till March, and then disappeared from the market. The latter began to sell at 14 seers at the end of February, and then rose steadily to 13 seers at the end of May and to 10 seers 10 chittacks at the end of July.

It is of some interest to compare the high prices now prevailing with those of 30 years ago. In 1907 the price of common rice has been consistently above 10 seers a rupee, even after the breaking of the monsoon, without relief measures being necessary; whereas in Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal* (published in 1877) it was stated that the rise of the price of rice to 12 seers per rupee and of maize to 15 seers per rupee would, in the opinion of the Collector, necessitate the opening of relief works.

Material Condition of the People.

From the enquiries made at the last settlement it appears that an average family in Saran consists of five members, and that an

ordinary cultivator has to spend Rs. 15 a year to maintain each person in his family. It may be therefore inferred that an ordinary agricultural family in Saran will require Rs. 75 a year to maintain itself in moderate comfort. The average profits of cultivation have been, on careful calculation, estimated at Rs. 25-10-0 per acre, so that an ordinary family of five members will be able to manage with a holding of 3 acres. If they carry on the work of cultivation themselves, and spend nothing on it except the cost of seed, the profits would amount to Rs. 30 per acre, and a holding of 2½ acres would consequently suffice for their maintenance in an ordinary year, while a family with 3 acres would be fairly comfortable, if not in debt. It is satisfactory, therefore, to find that the average size of the holding of a family of pure cultivators (who form more than three-fifths of the total population of the district) is 3.8 acres, i.e., it exceeds the subsistence holding (2½ acres) by more than an acre. Consequently the pure cultivators, as a body, if they are not in debt, should be in fairly comfortable circumstances. Of the labourers, about 2,40,000, or one-tenth of the total population, have holdings so small that they cannot maintain themselves on them in moderate comfort, and a similar proportion have no land at all, but must live entirely on the wages they earn. These cultivating and landless labourers, forming altogether 20 per cent of the total population, are probably unable to save anything even in the best of years and it is this class which must perforce turn to Government for relief in a year of scarcity. But it is noticeable that, even in the great famine of 1896-97, they displayed considerable staying powers and must have managed to maintain themselves without the assistance of Government, for the largest number of persons relieved on any one day was 58,173, or only 6 per cent of the population of the affected area.

Indebtedness.

Regarding indebtedness, Mr. Kerr writes:—"The ordinary cultivator should be able to save sufficient in good and ordinary years to tide him over an occasional season of short crops. There seems to be no reason why he should fall into debt. But, as a matter of fact, a very large proportion of the cultivators is in debt. Mr. Tytler goes so far as to say that 95 per cent of the *ryots* live and die in debt; and that they die in debt follows, as a matter of course, in the great majority of cases from the fact that they are born in debt and make no effort during their life-time to pay off their debt. Our statistics of mortgages do not disclose such a degree of indebtedness as was estimated by Mr. Tytler. They show that only 5½ per cent of the total *ryoti* area is mortgaged, and that only 15 per cent of the total number of holdings are affected either in whole or in part by mortgages on the land. The total indebtedness of the *ryots*, as recorded by us, is just under Rs. 50,00,000, or little more than one-tenth of the value of the gross outturn in an ordinary year. Amounts lent on security other than the land are of course not included, but the land is the *ryot's* chief source of credit, and only petty loans are

granted on other security. Our statistics also do not include mortgages in which the land is given as security, but possession is retained by the borrower. But the lender is generally too much afraid of a previous mortgage to advance money without obtaining possession; and loans of this kind are, as a rule, made only to persons whose credit is otherwise good, and do not represent any serious or permanent addition to the indebtedness of the agricultural classes.

"Allowing for all this, and for the fact that the original amount of the debt is generally swelled by the addition of the compound interest, we shall be safe in saying that the total indebtedness of the Saran *ryots* is well under a crore of rupees. As we shall see, the gross annual profits derived by the *ryots* from the area in their cultivation after payment of rent is usually over 3½ crores. The indebtedness of the Saran peasantry, as a whole, cannot, therefore, be considered a very serious matter. But it must be remembered that the indebtedness is borne by not more than 20 per cent of the total number of holdings. The proportionate annual profits of these would be little over 60 lakhs, and as practically the whole of this must be required for subsistence purposes, there is little chance of the debt being paid off from the profits of cultivation alone. As a matter of fact, too, many of the *ryots* take no trouble to pay off their debts. The profits of a good year are made the excuse for increased expenditure on marriages and other ceremonies. Under these circumstances, it is perhaps satisfactory to find the total amount of the cultivators' indebtedness no higher than it is. But though four-fifths of pure cultivators are probably not in debt at all, or at all events are not sufficiently involved to be compelled to part with their lands for the purpose of raising money, and though these can, taking one year with another, maintain themselves in moderate comfort by the profits of cultivation, it must not be supposed that the district could support any addition to the agricultural community without immediate deterioration of the condition of that community as a whole. Many members of the agricultural community must suffer severely in bad years, and, though the greater part of the cultivating classes can earn a comfortable livelihood at present, any considerable increase in their numbers under present conditions must be followed by substantial reduction of the standard of comfort."

After pointing out that Saran, having reached the point at which it can no longer support an increase in its population in moderate comfort from the produce of the soil, is meeting this strain on its resources, not by further subdivision of holdings and a consequent reduction in the standard of comfort, but by emigration, Mr. Kerr goes on to summarize his conclusions as follows :—

"(1) Eighty-four per cent of the total population of Saran, or just over two million souls, are entirely dependent on agriculture as a means of livelihood. (2) A quarter of a million of these have no lands at all, or only

minute plots, and are practically dependent on the wages of labour. Rather more than half of this class had to turn to Government for relief during the last famine. (3) Another quarter of a million have small holdings not exceeding two acres on the average for each family. This is insufficient to support them, and they have to eke out their livelihood by working for other cultivators. (4) The remaining one-half million have holdings exceeding on the average 3½ acres per family. These are pure cultivators, who only work in their own fields. As the smallest holding on which a family can be supported is 2¼ acres, this class as a body is in a moderate condition of comfort. Less than one-fifth of them are in debt to the extent that they have had to part with their holdings or portions of them in order to borrow money, and only one-twentieth of the *ryoti* area is mortgaged in this way. (5) The total amount of indebtedness of this kind is less than one-third of the share of the gross annual produce secured by the cultivating classes. On the other hand, the indebtedness is borne by less than one-fifth of the whole body of *ryots*, and on them it must press heavily. (6) Under the present conditions of agriculture, the district is incapable of supporting any considerable increase of population without a material reduction in the standard of comfort. (7) Even now the district produces barely sufficient food for its own requirements, but the excellence of its communications greatly lessens the gravity of this factor."

"The picture thus drawn," he adds, "contains both light and shade. Apart from the landless labourers, whose condition must always be precarious, the rest of the agricultural community, as a whole enjoy a moderate degree of comfort and can withstand a season of scarcity without turning to Government for relief. Their indebtedness is relatively small, and their lands are not passing into the hands of professional money-lenders to any appreciable extent. The census figures, and the conduct of the people in the last famine, show that they would rather emigrate than submit to a reduction of their standard of comfort or to further subdivision of their holdings. If this spirit prevails and spreads throughout the less enterprising classes, there should be no fear of any deterioration in the material condition of the Saran agricultural community".*

* J. H. Kerr, *Saran Survey and Settlement Report, Calcutta* 1903.

ENCLOSURE NO. II.

INDIGO.**

PROGRESS OF THE INDUSTRY.

The indigo industry appears to have been introduced in Bihar between 1782 and 1785 by Francois Grand, Collector of Tirhut (Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga), who left it on record that he introduced the manufacturing of indigo after the European manner, encouraged the establishment of indigo works and plantations, and erected three at his own expense. A few years later the industry was started in Saran, the first attempt to cultivate and manufacture the dye being made in 1793, when Dr. Ivory, Civil Surgeon at Chapra, and Mr. Robert Blake, Assay Master at the Patna Mint, obtained permission from Government to build a factory at Akbarpur (now Sitalpur) in the Sonepur thana. About the same time, Mr. Champain began building another factory close by at Shikarpur. and in 1794 Mr. Shore obtained permission to start a factory at or near Darauli; a license was granted to him to hold 50 *bighas* of land, but we find five years later, in 1799, that his successor was in possession of as much as 3,750 *bighas*, half of which were under indigo. Subsequently Mr. Champain, who had not obtained a licence from Government, appears to have left the factory at Shikarpur; and having been authorized to hold land for indigo cultivation, started work at Anantpur, close to the junction of the Ganges and Gandak, where he was succeeded in 1799 by Messrs. Douie and Maitland.

During the early part of the nineteenth century factories were established in all parts of the district, but up to about 1850 the cultivation of indigo by Europeans seems to have been combined with the growth and manufacture of sugar. About 1850 the high prices obtained for indigo dealt a fatal blow at the latter industry; the cultivation of sugar was replaced by indigo, and the sugar factories were converted into indigo concerns. After this, the industry continued to flourish until the end of the nineteenth century when there were no less than 35 indigo factories and 36 outworks with 45,500 acres under cultivation. During the last ten years the industry has suffered from the competition of the artificial dye in Europe and from high price of foodgrains and the consequent demand for land in Bihar. The price of the natural dye has fallen rapidly and the area under cultivation has contracted greatly being returned at only 11,200 acres in 1906-07. Government has come to the aid of the planters with substantial grants for scientific research, the aim

** This was the text of Chapter IX "The Indigo Industry" in *District Gazetteer of Saran* published in 1908. This text was omitted in the revised *District Gazetteer of Saran* published in 1930 and was replaced by a small section of Indigo in the text of Chapter VIII (Occupation, Manufacture and Trades). That section is also quoted at the end of this text.

of which is to ascertain whether it is possible to increase the outturn and quality of the dye at a cheaper cost; excellent work in the chemistry, bacteriology and agriculture of indigo has been done and is still progressing; and efforts have been made to improve the quality of the plant by importing fresh seed from Natal. But so far these experiments have not succeeded in arresting the decay of the industry. The price obtained for indigo is barely sufficient to cover the cost of production, and many factories are either closing altogether or are reducing the area cultivated with indigo, growing in its place sugar, cotton and country crops.

CULTIVATION.

Seed.

For a long time past the seed used in Saran has been imported, for the most part, from the United Provinces, and the system of getting seed in this way, without any special selection, has caused deterioration in the varieties commonly grown. Recently, however, Natal indigo (*Indigofera arrecta*) has been introduced, the seed being obtained direct from Natal and also from plants acclimatized in Java. This plant has been found to give a very considerable increase of colouring matter, and will produce excellent cuttings for two years in succession and mediocre plants for a third year, whereas other varieties have to be resown annually. It has a more vigorous habit of growth than the old variety, and the leaf contains a larger proportion of the colour-yielding principle.

Soils and Manures

Indigo may follow indigo, but is more generally rotated with such crops as sugarcane, tobacco, poppy, cereals and oilseeds. It is an exhausting crop, which cannot well be grown on the same land for more than three successive seasons; on the other hand, being a deep-rooted crop it forms an excellent rotation crop for those which have surface roots, as is the case with many foodgrains. It is usually grown on high lands beyond the reach of floods, deep alluvial loams seeming to suit the crop best. The refuse indigo plant (*sith*) is the manure most easily obtained and is very valuable; but it is said that it is less suited for indigo itself than for rotation crops, such as those mentioned above, and that indigo grown on land heavily treated with *sith* is liable to injury from insect-pests Farm manures, chemical manures, such as saltpetre and lime, bone-dust and oil-cakes are also used.

Tillage.

The land on which indigo is to be grown is prepared for sowing as soon as the *kharif* crops have been reaped. The land is ploughed and reploughed until the clods are all pulverized, and after being manured, is levelled and smoothed with a plank roller composed of a long heavy beam on which two men stand. The seed is sown

at the beginning of the hot weather and after sowing, the roller is again used to level the surface. The seedlings are very delicate until their roots are well developed, and many perish owing to dry west winds. They make slow progress until the monsoon sets in, when the growth becomes rapid; and they are ready for cutting, which takes place immediately before they flower, in July or August. A second crop, known as the *khunti* crop, is obtainable in September, but usually yields less than the first crop. The colouring matter from which indigotin is derived exists almost entirely in the leaf of the plant. It increases as the plant grows, but deteriorates after a certain stage; and it is imperative that the plant should be cut as soon as it is ripe and carted off quickly to the factory for manufacture.

MANUFACTURE.

Steeping and Oxidation.

The first process of manufacture consists of steeping the leaves, which is done in two sets of vats, one on a lower level than the other. Those on the highest level are used for steeping the plant, which is kept submerged by logs of wood or bars fixed in position. During this process active fermentation takes place, and when it is complete, the liquid is drained off into the lower vats, and is there subjected to a brisk beating, the effect of which is to cause oxidation and separate the particles of dye. As the oxidation proceeds, dark blue particles of indigotin appear in the liquid, and the beating is continued until a little of the liquid placed in a saucer readily throws a dark blue precipitate. Oxidation was at one time accomplished by hand-beating, but in most factories it is now done by a beating wheel worked by power from a central engine.

Boiling and Final Preparation

Finally, the sediment (*mal*) which remains in the vat is boiled, strained, and made up into cakes for the market. The first process in the final stages of manufacture is to boil the precipitate which settles after oxidation. The dye matter is next placed on a cloth strainer until it becomes fairly dry. It is then carried to the press and subjected to gradually increasing pressure until it has taken the form of firm slabs, which are cut into cakes and slowly dried on racks.

LANDED INTERESTS.

The indigo concerns, as a whole, hold very little land as proprietors or permanent tenure-holders, owing to the reluctance of proprietors to sell their estates or alienate their interests by granting permanent (*mukarari*) tenures. The latter are particularly rare, and as a rule, factories hold practically no land on permanent lease, except the area occupied by their factory buildings and a few scattered patches, which circumstances have enabled them to obtain on favourable terms. The bulk of the factories interest in the land

is of a temporary nature, based on what are known as *thika* leases, which run for short periods hardly ever exceeding nine years. The ordinary conditions of these leases are that the factory shall pay the proprietor a certain amount, which is, as a rule, the total amount of the rent-roll of the village plus Rs. 8 or Rs. 10 per *bigha* available for indigo cultivation, and that on the expiry of the lease the factory shall vacate all lands in the village, after the indigo crop then on the ground has been cut. As undertenure-holders, factories hold a very small area, mainly on mortgage of some kind or other.

The main object of factories in acquiring these proprietary and *quasi*-proprietary rights is to secure land for the cultivation of indigo, either direct through their own servants, or through the ordinary *ryots* of the villages. A factory rarely attempts to make a profit over rent collections; not infrequently indeed, it is content to collect less from the *ryots* than it has to pay to the superior landlord, for its object is to keep the *ryots* contended and to make them willing to grow indigo or supply land for the cultivation of indigo.

Temporary Tenures.

The temporary tenures held by the concerns are either simple leases, under which the factory agrees to pay a certain rent for a term of years, or of the nature of usufructuary mortgages, the factory advancing a certain sum to the superior landlords at the beginning of the lease. The terms of repayment vary. Under a *sadua patua* lease, both principal and interest are liquidated before the end of the period of the lease by yearly deductions from the rent payable to the proprietors. Under a *zarpeshgi* lease, the interest only is liquidated by deductions from the annual rent, and the principal is repayable at the end of the term, the lessee having a right to continue in the enjoyment of the tenure until the principal is repaid. The latter system is the more common, and is preferred by planters, because the proprietor is often unable to repay the advance on the expiry of the lease, and the factory thus continues in possession of the tenure indefinitely.

Panch Kathia System.

A factory taking a lease of a village obtains direct possession of all lands which were in the cultivation of the proprietor. Formerly it was also the custom for the *ryots*, if required, to give up a certain proportion of their holdings, generally three or five *kathas* in the *bigha*, to the factory for the direct cultivation of indigo. They received a proportionate deduction of their rent during the term of the factory's lease and a promise that their land should be restored to them on its expiry. This system, which is known as *tin kathia* or *panch kathia*, is open to many objections, not the least of which is that it frequently has the effect of obliterating tenant right. Though leases rarely run for more than nine years, they are often renewed as a matter of course, and if they are *zarpeshgi* leases, may continue

for an indefinite period. Thus, a factory may retain continuously the lease of a village and possession of the *panch kathia* lands for a generation or more, and when the time comes for the village to be returned to the proprietor, it is often impossible, in the absence of any map or record, and after the obliteration of field boundaries, which indigo cultivation entails, to say what particular block belongs to a particular holding. The system is, however, now dying out.

Ryoti Interests.

The factories possess *ryoti* interests in a small area, these interests being usually acquired by purchase at a Civil Court sale for arrears of rent. The provisions of the law facilitate such acquisition of *ryoti* rights in a district like Sāran, where proprietary interests are minutely subdivided, and it is common for a factory to hold a lease of a share in an undivided estate. Under a ruling of the High Court, a tenure-holder holding a lease of a share of an estate can acquire occupancy rights during the continuance of his lease, and by paying rent to the proprietors of the share not in lease to him, become a *ryot* for all the land in his direct occupation. Tenure-holding factories especially have taken full advantage of these provisions, for it is worth their while to pay a good price for an occupancy holding containing good lands, and purchase at a Civil Court sale gives them a clear title. Hence, it often happens that, on the expiry of their lease, they are able to retain possession as occupancy *ryots* of a considerable amount of land which they have acquired in this way during the term of the lease.

Kurtauli Leases.

A considerable area is held by the factories as under-*ryots*, part being acquired on the *panch kathia* system described above, but most being held on what are called *kurtauli* leases, which are gradually displacing the *panch kathia* system. Under these leases, the factory pays the *ryot* a sum equivalent to five or seven years' rental of the land for which the sub-lease is granted, and cultivates the land for that period, at the end of which it reverts to the *ryot*. The main objection to this system from the factory's point of view is the risk of the *ryot* going off with the advance without paying his rent, for in that case the landlord may sell up the holding and refuse to recognize the factory, which consequently loses its money. In practice, however, the risk is not very great, as *kurtauli* leases are usually granted for parts of holdings only, and the *ryot* remains in the village to cultivate the remainder

Sudbharna Leases.

A modification of the *kurtauli* lease is the *sudbharna*, which resembles the *zarpeshgi* tenure described above. The factory gives the *ryot* an advance, the interest on which is liquidated by deduction from the annual rent for the land sublet. The principal is repayable at the end of the lease, but as in the case of *zarpeshgi* tenures, the

borrower is often unable to meet his obligations, and the factory retains possession of the land indefinitely. This system is prevented from being common by the fact that, as a rule, only a *ryot* who is deeply involved is willing to bind himself to the factory in this way, and a man in such a position can give the factory no security for its money beyond the land, which is worthless if he should default in payment of his rent to the superior landlord.

SYSTEM OF CULTIVATION.

The main systems of indigo cultivation practised in Saran are known as *ziraat*, i.e., the home-farm system of direct cultivation by means of hired servants, the *satta* system of cultivation through factory tenants under contracts, and *khushki* or cultivation by means of oustide *ryots*.

Ziraat System.

The name *ziraat* is applied to all lands cultivated by the factory direct with hired labour, either as proprietor, tenure-holder, *ryot* or under-*ryot*. Over three-fourths of the area under indigo is of this class, and owing to its careful cultivation it returns the best profits.

Satta System.

The *satta* system is so-called because a document (*satta*) is executed by the *ryot*, who usually belongs to a village of which the factory is the landlord. By this document he enters into a contract to grow indigo on a certain portion of his holding in consideration of an advance of money, either without interest or at a low rate of interest; he further binds himself to pay damages to the factory if he should fail to carry out his share of the agreement. The factory supplies the seed, and carts the indigo when cut to the vats for manufacture, but the *ryot* is responsible for the preparation of the land and for all expenses of cultivation. The indigo when delivered to the factory is paid for at a certain rate per *bigha*; if the crop should fail through no fault of the *ryot*, he is paid between Rs. 5 and Rs. 6 a *bigha* to recoup him for the expenses of cultivation. The agreement is usually executed for the same term as that of the factory's lease of the village, and the original advance, with principal and interest is worked off by easy deductions from the sum annually payable to the *ryot*. Agreement of this kind are usually only executed by tenants of the factory, but occasionally they are executed by *ryots* entirely independent of the factory, and are then known as *khushki* or voluntary *sattas*.

Khushki System.

The *khushki* or voluntary system, though more common in Saran than in Muzaffarpur and Champaran is comparatively unimportant. The *ryot* has usually no connection with the factory, nor does he necessarily receive any advance. The factory supplies the seed, but

all the cultivation is done by the *ryot,* who supplies the seed, but all the cultivation is done by the *ryot,* who selects his own land, and when the crop is cut, is paid at the rate of about 3 annas per maund for the green plant. If the outturn reaches 100 maunds an acre, as it may easily do with fairly good cultivation, the *ryot* makes a net profit of between Rs. 12 and Rs. 15 after paying all expenses; his land is also benefited by the rotation of a deep-root crop with ordinary surface crops, and generally yields a good *rabi* crop in the spring after the indigo is cut. This system is not usual as it does not pay the planters. A large outturn of plant per acre is required to give a good profit, and this can only be secured by high cultivation of lands carefully selected on a sound system of rotation, elements which are *prima facie* more likely to be present in a system of direct cultivation under the supervision of the factory manager and his servants.

Badlain System.

In conclusion, the system known as *badlain* or exchange of lands may be mentioned. Indigo, being a deep-rooted crop, exhausts the soil after two or three seasons, unless it is highly manured. On the other hand it forms an excellent rotation crop with grain and other surface crops. Consequently, it is advantageous both to planter and to *ryot* for the latter to take over for a few years lands which have grown indigo for the cultivation of ordinary crops, giving in exchange an equal area of his own lands for the temporary cultivation of indigo. It is obvious that the system can only be worked successfully if the terms of the agreement are strictly kept on both sides.

FACTORIES.

The following list of the indigo factories at work in the district with their outworks has been supplied by the Collector :—

Subdivision.	Factories.	Outworks.
Chapra ..	Ramkola ..	..
	Maniara ..	Sipaiya.
Gopalganj ..	Rajapatti ..	Pakri.*
	Sadoa ..	Shahpur
Siwan ..	Bansapali ..	..
	Chakia ..	Jagdishpur.
	Gopalpur ..	..
	Jogapur ...	Chauki.
		Kahala.†
		Madhupur.†
	Partabpur ..	Bankath.
		Ratasia.
	Zamapur ..	..

* In Chapra. † In Gopalganj.

Extract from the Revised District Gazetteer of 1930.

INDIGO.

About twenty years ago there were ten indigo factories with nine outworks and the subject was considered important enough in the first edition of the Gazetteer to have a chapter to itself. There are now only three concerns which grew between them about a thousand acres of indigo in 1928 and none at all in 1929 and a brief history of the industry will suffice. It was apparently started in Tirhut between 1782 and 1785 and the first factory in Saran was built near Sitalpur in 1793. The rapid growth of the industry is shown by the following fact: a Mr. Shore was allowed to start a factory near Darauli in 1794 and was given a license to hold 50 *bighas* of land, five years later his successor was in possession of 3,750 *bighas*, half of which was under indigo. Up to about 1850 the cultivation of indigo was generally combined with the growth and manufacture of sugar. About that time the high prices obtainable for indigo dealt a fatal blow to the sugar industry which was almost entirely given up. Indigo continued to flourish till the end of the nineteenth century when there were 35 factories with 36 outworks and 45,500 acres under cultivation. From then onwards the industry has suffered from the competition of the artificial dye in Europe and from the high price of foodgrains and consequent demand for land in Bihar. For a year or two during the Great War, prices went up and some large profits were made but this state of affairs did not last and as stated above, the cultivation of indigo is now negligible.

ENCLOSURE NO. III.

RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.*

CASH RENTS.

Cash rents are almost universal, only 3.5 per cent of the holdings of settled and occupancy *raiyats* which account for nearly 85 per cent of the total number of holdings, paying produce rents. The average rate of rent is higher than in any other district of North Bihar and is also higher than in the neighbouring districts of the United Provinces. Rents generally rule lower in the north of the district; the southern part where the pressure of population is greatest and cultivation most advanced is mainly responsible for the high rates prevailing. The following table shows the average incidence of the rents recorded at the last Settlement (1915–1921) for different classes of *raiyats* :—

Class of *raiyats*.	Area in acres	Rent in rupees.	Rate per acre.
			Rs. a. p.
Raiyats at fixed rates ..	9,398	31,488	3 5 8
Settled or occupancy *raiyats* .	11,43,538	50,86,928	4 7 0
Non-occupancy *raiyats* ..	3,854	14,604	3 12 8
Total ..	11,56,790	51,33,020	4 7 0

It will be observed that nearly the whole of the rental of the district is paid by settled and occupancy *raiyats*, less than half a lakh being payable by *raiyats* holding at fixed rates and by non-occupancy *raiyats*. As in the earlier settlement the rents paid by settled and occupancy *raiyats* are highest in Sonepur and Chapra thanas where the average is Rs. 5-14-10 and Rs. 5-7-5, respectively, Sonepur being a densely populated thana while the rate for Chapra is raised by the high rents paid for garden lands in the neighbourhood of the town. Fixed rents are low in Darauli and Manjhi thanas where there is a large number of *bhekhbirits* or resumed rent-free grants, and also in Mirganj and Masrakh; these rents are highest in Basantpur thana, mainly because it contains some villages with rich and fertile soil in which valuable crops are grown. The rent rate of non-occupancy *raiyats* is considerably higher than that of occupancy *raiyats*, and as might be expected, under-*raiyats* pay the highest rents of all. In some villages they acquire occupancy rights by custom, but most are

* Reprint of the text of Chapter VII in the *District Gazetteer of Saran*, 1930.

mere tenants-at-will and allow the superior *raiyat* to exact what terms he pleases. The number on non-occupancy *raiyats* decreased largely between the Cadastral and Revisional Settlement, presumably because they acquire a higher status by lapse of time.

Enhancement of Rents.

At the assessment made by the orders of Akbar at the end of the sixteenth century, an all-round rate of about Rs. 1-8-0 per acre was imposed. For 220 years after Akbar's settlement no satisfactory evidence of rent rates is forthcoming but it appears that in the beginning of the nineteenth century the rate was over Re. 1 an acre in the northern part of the district, which was in an unsettled state, and between Rs. 2 and Rs. 4 in the rest of the district though the rates for good lands capable of bearing special crops were three or four times as much as this. Forty years later a rent rate of Rs. 2-6-0 was paid in the villages subject to resumption, but there are good grounds for believing that the rate for the district as a whole was a good deal higher than this. Finally in 1870 we find that rate of Rs. 4-14-0 per acre prevailed in the area held by the Hathwa Raj as a result of three enhancements made in the preceding twenty years; and it is certain that most other landlords must have raised their demands to an even greater extent. At the time of the Cadastral Survey it was found that in the estates of petty landlords enhancements were going on up to the commencement of the settlement proceedings. From that time the *raiyats* seem to have had a clearer idea of their rights and the number of illegal enhancements which came to light during the revisional proceedings was not unduly high.

One of the commonest occasions for obtaining an illegal enhancement was when an estate was partitioned under the old Partition Act. The proprietor of each newly-formed estate found himself in possession of what were practically new holdings and had to write up a new rent-roll with very little to guide him. He often therefore levied entirely new rates to which the *raiyats* agreed to save themselves from trouble. Enhancements also very often follow sales for arrears of land revenue owing to a common belief that the new proprietor starts with a *tabula rasa*. At the last settlement cases were found enhancements by compromise in the civil court in contravention of the Bengal Tenancy Act; others had been effected during partitions made either amicably or under the Batwara Act; in cases of this nature the enhancements were disallowed. It was also found in many villages that enhancement had been made on the pretext of excess areas having been discovered by measurement but the alleged excess was generally fictitious.

There are two other methods of raising rents which were formerly common and are probably not yet entirely obsolete. The landlord may prepare a false set of rent-rolls and institute rent suits against a few *raiyats* who either allow a collusive decree to be passed or fail on contest as they have no rebutting evidence. The other method

is to let out some village to a tenure-holder for a term of years; the *thikadar* is not too scrupulous in the means he adopts to bring the tenants to terms and is frequently able to hand the villages back with a much enhanced rent-roll.

Produce Rents.

Produce rents are of three kinds—*bdtai, bhaoli* and *mankhap*. Under the *batai* system the actual crop is divided either in the field or on the threshing floor. Under the *bhaoli* system, the value of the crop is appraised on the field before it is cut, and the *raiyat* pays his share to the landlord either in kind or in cash after the harvest. Where the *mankhap* system prevails, the *raiyat* has to pay a certain number of maunds per *bigha* to the landlord irrespective of the outturn. This system is seldom met with in Saran and is extremely unpopular with the *raiyats*, for the rate is generally so high as to leave the cultivator only a small margin of profit in ordinary years while in bad years he often has to make over the whole produce to the landlord. These disadvantages are not counterbalanced by the fact that in an extremely good year the *raiyat* may be able to retain more of the produce than he would if he paid a *batai* rent; on the whole it may be said that the system has nothing to recommend it from the *raiyat's* point of view. The *batai* system is the most common in Saran and is fostered by the *gomashta* class to whom it offers opportunities for pilfering. Further description of produce rents is not necessary as they are of little importance in Saran; their rarity is a sign of agricultural development. At the last settlement only 53,366 acres of land were recorded as held on produce rent and of this total more than 10,000 acres was held by under-*raiyats*.

WAGES.

Skilled carpenters earn Re. 1 a day and the less skilled about 14 annas. Masons get 12 annas and earth-digger 8 annas. Thatchers get from 8 to 12 annas and blacksmiths from 10 to 14 annas Ploughmen and ordinary male labourers generally get 12 annas a day and women and children half that amount. A cart is hired for Rs. 2 a day. Domestic servants are usually paid about Rs 4 a month with food and clothing besides. *Syces* (grooms) get Rs. 10 or Rs. 12 a month and sweepers Rs. 7, *dhobies* (washermen) are paid 8 annas for 20 articles, and a barber gets one anna a shave.

The above figures are considerably higher than those ascertained at the last wage-census in 1924: and the latter. again, were from 95 per cent (in the case of blacksmiths and carpenters) to 38 per cent (in the case of unskilled daily labour paid in cash) higher than the figures recorded at the wage-census of 1916.

The wages of village artisans and of field labourers are, however, generally paid in kind and at the time of harvesting and threshing, the labourers are given one bundle out of every 21 bundles cut

and one *paseri* out of every 21 *paseris* threshed. For threshing, as also often for ploughing, the cultivators adopt a system of mutual aid, one man lending his bullocks one day and getting his neighbour's the next. For threshing the landlord's crops a tenant has to lend his bullocks, getting little in return except their feed, and perhaps a meal for himself if he assists personally.

SUPPLY OF LABOUR.

The cultivation of the *bhadai*, *aghani* and *rabi* crops affords almost continuous work to labourers from about the end of May when *tamni* or the preparation of the land for *bhadai* crops begins, until the end of October. From the beginning of November till the middle of March is the slack season for labour. In November and December labourers subsist on the produce of their own *bhadai* fields and on any earnings they can get by working in those of their masters; and during the next 2½ months they live on what they earn from cutting paddy; even though they exchange the paddy they receive for cheaper food, they often have difficulty in making both ends meet. At this time, however, there is a great exodus of labourers in search of employment, the coolies going in thousands to work in the fields, in the docks on the Hooghly and on the railways and returning for the agricultural operations which commence with the break of the monsoon. They usually borrow about Rs. 10 a head to enable them to go to their work but the interest is high, being sometimes as much as 75 per cent as money is much in demand at the time. Repayments are made monthly, quarterly or on return. The *mallahs* who go with their boats to engage in the carrying trade near Calcutta get loans on such occasions at a nominal rate of 24 per cent per annum but the *mahajan* deducts 5 per cent of the principal at the time of making the loan

In 1906 an enquiry was held into the labour supply of Bengal and it was then ascertained that Saran was the first district in the then province of Bengal to reach the point where it could not maintain its population The people of Saran appeared to be well aware of the benefits to be derived from employment in industrial centres and then, as now a larger number than from most other districts sought employment in those centres spontaneously.

PRICES.

Makai and rice are the staple food-crops of which the average retail prices are prepared under section 39 of the Bengal Tenancy Act. In 1928 rice sold at an average of 5½ seers to the rupee at Chapra, of 6 seers 15 chittacks at Mirganj and of 4 seers 14 chittacks at Siwan; at the same places *makai* sold at 9 seers 9 chittacks, 10 seers 6 chittacks and 8½ seers, respectively. In 1927 rice averaged 6 seers at Chapra, 6 seers 7 chittacks at Mirganj and 4¾ seers at Siwan, while *makai* sold on an average at 9½ seers, 10 seers, 10 seers 11 chittacks and 8¼ seers respectively at the same centres.

As regards the prices of foodgrains at different times of the year, prices are easy at the beginning of October, when the *bhadai* is well on the market, but they rise sharply by the end of the month. No doubt owing to exportation; by the end of November they are again easier with the incoming of the great *aghani* rice crop, and then rise with more or less regularity till the end of February. In the month of March relief comes with the ingathering of the *rabi* harvest, and prices fall till about the end of April or the middle of May, when a rise commences once more which continues till the early *bhadai* crops come in towards the end of July. These crops are so cheap and plentiful that the general average then falls sharply till the end of September.

The harvesting of each of the three great crops naturally ushers in a district fluctuation in prices. Grain is, on the whole, cheapest in September just after the *bhadai* is in; not quite so cheap early in May when the *rabi* has all been gathered home; and less cheap at the end of November when the rice reaches the market. Conversely, grain is dearest just before each of these harvests is reaped, i.e., in October, February and July. It might have been thought that as rice is the largest and most important crop in the district, its advent would have had the greatest effect on the prices of food; but it must be remembered that, owing to the demand for exportation, rice is never a very cheap grain. The same consideration holds good in a less and still lesser degree as regards the *rabi* and *bhadai*, for this latter crop (except maize) is but little exported; in other words and speaking generally, the influence of each crop varies inversely with the demand upon it for export.

Famine Prices.

The maximum price of paddy during the famine of 1866 was Rs. 5-10-0 per standard maund and that of rice Rs. 8 per maund; the highest price that rice reached in 1874 was 9 seers to the rupee. In the famine of 1897 the price of rice rose to 9 seers in October. 1896, was as high as 8 seers to the rupee in the second fortnight of May, 1897, and reached the maximum of 7¼ seers in the second half of June. Maize started at 12 seers at the beginning of December, 1896, rose to 10½ seers in the first three months of 1897 and reached the highest price of 6½ seers at the end of June. The cheapest articles of food throughout the famine were *marua* which was only obtainable in small quantities and barley. The former sold at from 13 to 13½ seers till March and then disappeared from the market; the latter began to sell at 14 seers at the end of February, and then rose steadily to 13 seers at the end of May and to 10 seers and 10 chittacks at the end of July.

The world-wide rise in prices is perhaps more noticeable in India than anywhere else; in Hunter's *Statistical Account of Bengal*, published in 1877, it is stated that the rise of the price of rice to 12 seers per rupee and of maize to 15 seers per rupee would, in the

Collector's opinion, necessitate the opening of relief works. Twenty years ago it was remarked that in 1907 the price of rice had been consistently above 10 seers per rupee without any relief measures being necessary. During the last two or three years rice has been on an average twice as expensive and there seems to be no prospect of any permanent fall. Prices prevailing more than ten years back are now of little more than historical interest and every allowance must be made when comparing present conditions with those prevailing even a few years ago.

MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

At the time of the Cadastral Survey elaborate enquiries were made into the condition of the people and the profits of agriculture. It was estimated that the average family consisted of five persons whom it cost in all Rs. 75 a year to maintain in moderate comfort, and that a holding of 2½ acres was the minimum that would suffice for the maintenance. It was also found that the average size of the holding of the family of pure cultivators was 3.8 acres. Cultivators with less than this and landless labourers were always struggling and probably unable ever to save. But it was also noted that even in the great famine of 1896-97 this class displayed more staying power than might have been expected and, though they formed 20 per cent of the population, the largest number of persons relieved in any one day during that famine was only 6 per cent of the population of the affected areas.

The estimate of family expenditure given here can no longer be regarded as accurate but it is probable that the pure cultivator is better off now. He gets at least twice as much money for his surplus produce if he sells it; the general cost of living has, no doubt, increased but there has not been a proportionate increase in wages paid in kind and most of the services which a cultivator has to purchase are so paid.

INDEBTEDNESS.

The total indebtedness shown by mortgages with possession at the Cadastral Survey was a little under Rs 50 lakhs. After allowing for mortgages without possession, for loans on security other than land and for the swelling of the original debts by compound interest, it was calculated that the total indebtedness of the Saran *raiyat* was well under a crore of rupees, while the gross annual profits from cultivation were estimated to be Rs. 3½ crores. At the time of the Revisional Survey, the total amount advanced on mortgages with possession was Rs. 2,17,89,271, while a large number of enquiries and special crop-cutting experiments carried on throughout the operations gave an annual gross outturn from cultivation of a little over Rs. 4½ crores and an annual net profit of a little under Rs. 2½ crores.

It is notoriously difficult to generalize about the material condition of the inhabitants of an entire district. The Ṣaran *raiyat* is improvident like the *raiyats* elsewhere in the sense that he is compelled by custom to borrow for unproductive purposes, such as weddings and funerals, and makes little or no attempt to reduce his indebtedness when he gets a good harvest. But it is probable that the cultivator with a holding of about 4 acres or more is not really in a hopeless position and could, if he would, free himself of debt; the fact that 71 per cent of the sales of occupancy holdings are to other *raiyats* and only 23 per cent to money-lenders supports this view. Labourers and cultivators of smaller holdings have been more severely affected by the general rise in prices but they have this compensation, that when they emigrate in search of employment—and it has already been noted how freely the Saran *raiyat* does emigrate—they get greatly increased cash wages and even with the present scale of prices have a surplus which they can remit or bring home. The co-operative movement will also, it is expected, in time improve the position of even the poorest.

CO OPERATIVE CREDIT.

The Co-operative Credit Movement had not come into existence at all in Saran when the first edition of this Gazetteer was published.

The Movement started in Siwan subdivision where four societies were registered in May, 1913. By February, 1915, the number was 12 which by 1928 had risen to 228 with 5,247 individual members. Their working capital is over Rs. 10½ lakhs, paid-up capital over Rs. 5½ lakhs and reserve fund a little over a lakh. The rise of the Siwan Central Bank, which is reported to be one of the best in the province, is equally remarkable; it was started in 1915 with a working capital of Rs. 10,000 and 12 societies under it, it now has 236 village societies, a working capital of Rs. 9¼ lakhs, a reserve fund of over Rs. 60,000, other reserves of over Rs. 20,000 and a building of its own which cost Rs. 24,000. Its paid-up capital has risen from Rs. 2,480 in 1915 to Rs. 1,01,240 in 1928.

In the Gopalganj subdivision a modest start was made in 1924 with one society. Another was registered in the next year and seven more in 1916. The number is now 158 with a total membership of 2,897. Their working capital is nearly Rs. 5 lakhs, paid-up capital half a lakh and reserve and other funds another half a lakh. A Central Bank for the subdivision was started in 1917 with a working capital of Rs. 20,000 which has now risen to Rs. 5 lakhs; in the same period the reserve fund has risen from Rs. 56 to Rs. 17,534 with other funds amounting to Rs. 30,000.

For various reasons the Sadar subdivision was slow in taking up the Movement and it was not till 1923 that a start was made and 15 societies registered. There are now a hundred societies with a

working capital of Rs. 3¾ lakhs, paid-up share capital of Rs. 45,000 and reserve and other funds of Rs. 17,000.

Apart from purely credit operations, the banks and societies have interested themselves in attempts to ameliorate the general conditions of life. Guarantee societies in the Siwan and Gopalganj subdivisions encourage arbitration in petty disputes, suggest sanitary improvements and propagate improved methods of agriculture. Similarly the Central Banks have made themselves responsible for about twenty village schools and have organized demonstrations of up-to-date agricultural implements and manures.

A unique society has recently been organized among the *Magahiya Doms* of the Mashrakh and Chainpur Settlements; its aim is not only to provide loans for cultivation and industry but also to create a desire for an honest way of life instead of a life of crime.

ENCLOSURE IV.

Statement showing the names of Estates transferred from this district to another district and vice versa.

Serial no.	Year of transfer of Estates.	Estates transferred from this district.		Estates transferred from other district.		Remarks.
		Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	1906	2953	Bishunpur Arjun ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna as it lies in the geographical limits of this district, *vide* Commissioner's no. 4002-R., dated the 21st December 1905, with effect from the 1st April 1906.
2	1906	2955	Beerbhum Chak ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna as it lies within the geographical limits of this district, *vide* Commissioner's no. 4002-R, dated the 21st December 1905, with effect from the 1st April 1906.
3	1906	2998	Gopalpur Panchu ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna as it lies in the geographical limits of this district, *vide* Commissioner's no. 2621, dated the 5th September 1905, with effect from the 1st April 1906.
4	1906	3013	Harahanpur ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna district, *vide* Commissioner's letter no. 2107-R. dated the 7th August 1905, based on instruction contained in Board's Circular no. 5 of May, 1905 with effect from the 1st April 1906.
5	1906	3018	Jalarpur ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna, *vide* Commissioner's no. 2107-R', dated the 7th August 1905, based on the instruction contained in Board's Circular no. 5 of May, 1905 with effect from the 1st April 1956.
6	1906	3087	Madhopur ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
7	1907	3088	Madhopur Erazi ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
8	1906	3108	Narayan Chak ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.

9	1906	3128	Kasim Chak	. .	. .	.	Ditto ditto ditto.
10	1906	3129	Ditto	. .	. .	. .	Ditto ditto ditto.
11	1952	3140	Rahat Diara	. .	. . . .	. .	The Estate bearing tauzi no. 3140 removed from the Revenue Roll of the district of Saran being transferred to the district of Patna as desired by the Revenue Department, L R. Section letter no. 4177--L.R.. dated the 9th July 1954 and subsequently transfer of the estate sanction with effect from the date of vesting, i.e., the 22nd May 1952, the Commissioner, Tirhut Division, Muzaffarpur, under rule 2 of page 13 of the Tauzi Manual, *vide* Commissioner's Memo. no. 2A 534, dated the 18th February 1954.
12	1926	5527	Adhaijhua	. .	.	. .	The estate has been transferred to the district of Champaran with effect from Kist September, 1926, orders of the Government of Bihar and Orissa conveyed in their letter no. I-VI—21—683-R.R.. dated the 27th June 1926, *vide* Collector's Parwana dated the 17th August 1926.
13	1896	2652	Nawada Baijgai	. .	.	. .	Transferred to Muzaffarpur as per Board's letter no. 495 A., dated the 15th May 1896 and Commissioner's memo. no. 97-R.-Cir.. dated the 26th May 1896, with effect from the 1st April 1896.
14	1896	2940	Basant Chak	. .	. .	. .	Transferred to Patna district as per Board's letter no 475-A., dated the 15th May 1896, and Commissioner's memo. no. 97—R.F.R . dated the 26th May 1896, but the name of Tauzi no. borne on the Revenue Roll without Jama assessed in Collector's Parwana, dated the 2nd November 1896.
15	1902	. .	. .		6308	Araziganj Brarway Mohazi Barhara.	Old T. no. 6308 of the Shahabad district transferred to this district as per Board's no. 6-A., dated the 4th January 1902, received with Commissioner's no. 5075-R.. dated the 13th January 1902, with effect from the 1st April 1902.
16	1906	2430	Dumri Dewra	. .	. .	. .	Transferred to Muzaffarpur. *vide* Commissioner's letter no. 2573-R., dated the 1st September 1905. The transfer takes effect from the 1st April 1906, *vide* Commissioner's no. 2955-R., dated the 23rd September 1905.

ENCLOSURE IV—*contd.*

Serial no.	Year of transfer of Estates.	Estates transferred from this district.		Estates transferred from other district.		Remarks.
		Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	1916	2926	Ismailpur ..	..	..	The estate has been removed from the Revenue Roll of the district of Saran, *vide* Board of Revenue letter no. 18-75 of 17/4, dated the 28th June 1916/1st July 1918, received with Commissioner's memo. no. 1 0-R., and 122-13-14, dated the 6th July 1918.
18	1946	6941	Amarpur ..	..	..	The estate bearing T. no. 6941 has been transferred from the district of Saran to that of Ballia under the order of Government of U. P., *vide* letter no. 6982-R/IVL-6/46, dated the 27th July 1946, copy received with memo. no. 18-44-8A., dated the 9th July 1946 of Secretary to this Board of Revenue, Bihar, Patna. The transfer to take effect from the 1st April 1946 (XXVII-6 of 46 *ek* 24).
19	1908	3089	Mirpur Sangram ..	..	..	Transferred to Patna district with effect from the 1st April 1908 as sanctioned by the Commissioner of the Patna Division in his letter no. 705 8 of 1907-08, dated the 24th March 1908.
20	1908	3090	Ditto ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
21	1908	3091	Ditto ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
22	1902	4419	Maseer Deona ..	..	..	Transferred to Ballia district with effect from September Kist 1902 under Bengal Government notification no. 951-J., dated the 26th May 1902, published at page 752, Part I of the *Calcutta Gazette*, dated the 28th *idem*.
23	1903	..	..	5523	Deara Doomri.	Transferred from Ballia district as per notification no. 950-J., dated the 26th May 1902 with effect from January Kist 1903 Tauzi no. 5523 of Ballia district—1957.
24	1903	..	..	5524	Jasira Harf.	Ditto ditto ditto.

25	1905	..	..	5560	Deora Matiyar.	Transferred from Ballia district under Government notification no. 2974-J. D., dated the 30th September 1900, published at page 1439, Part I of *Calcutta Gazette*, dated the 5th October 1900 with effect from 3rd Kist ending 12th January 1905.
26	1905	..	..	5561	Chatiya Deona (Govt. estate leased to farmers for periods).	Transferred from Ballia district under Government notification no. 2974 J., dated the 30th September 1904, published at page 1439, Part I of *Calcutta Gazette*, 3rd Kist ending 12th January 1905.
27	1905	.	..	5562	Sampur	Ditto ditto ditto.
28	1905	5767	Deona Matiyar ..	..	..	The estate bearing no. 3767 has been transferred from Revenue Roll of the Saran district with effect from 1905, *vide* Board's memo. no. 374 A, dated the 21st January 1907, on Return IX per Kist September, 1906 and Collector's Parwana, dated the 7th February 1907.
29	1908	5596	Erazi.iawbaru Sarangpur.	..	..	Transferred to Muzaffarpur district with effect from the 1st April 1908, sanctioned by the Commissioner of Patna in his letter no. 753/2 of 1907-08, dated the 14th December 1907, owing to a change in course of the river Gandak.
30	1908	5597	Erazi Bashi Naw Bazar Rampur Ruder.	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
31	1908	5598	Diarauphewa ..	..	..	Ditto ditto ditto.
32	1919	22	Adamapur Deara ..	..	..	The estate has been removed from the Tauzi Roll of the district of Saran to Ballia district with effect from the 1st April 1919 on the ground that it is on Ballia side of the river Gogra under order of Board of Revenue conveyed in its letter no. 18-27/2, dated the 24th March 1919, and Commissioner's no. R. 665-22-4-4, dated the 29th March 1919 and contained in Khasmahal Deputy Collector, Siwan dated the 14th April 1918.

ENCLOSURE IV—*concld.*

Serial no.	Year of transfer of Estates.	Estates transferred from this district.		Estates transferred from other district.		Remarks.
		Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	Tauzi no.	Names of Estates.	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33	1944	7003	Amarpur Sisotar ..	..	..	Transferred to Ballia district owing to the change in the deep stream verification under the order of the Board of Revenue, contained in their letter no. 18-62-5-A., dated the 29th February 1939, received in the Commissioner's memo no. R.-712, dated the 6th March 1944, with effect from 1st April 1944.
34	1925	7008	Deara Bellarn Karmaho	..	.	The estate transfer owing to the change in the deep stream verification to Ballia district with effect from the 1st April 1924 under the order of the Board of Revenue, contained in letter no. R 640/22-d., dated the 6th March 1926, contained in Khasmahal Deputy Collector's Parwana, dated the 13th March 1926.
35	1944	7087	Deara Amarpur Dhanchhan.	.	..	This estate has been transferred to Ballia district owing to the change in the deep stream, *vide* verification under the orders of the Board of Revenue of Bihar in the letter no. 18-62-5A., dated the 29th February 1944, received with Commissioner's memo. no. R-712, dated the 6th March 1944, with effect from the 1st April 1944.

N.B.—(*i*) There are two other estates -Bhagandpur bearing T. no. I 48148—which have been struck off from the Revenue Roll in pursuance of Board's instruction contained in his letter no. 933 A, dated the 12th October 1892. The reason as to why these tauzies were struck off is not mentioned in Revenue Roll

(*ii*) The above statement has been prepared on the basis of Revenue Rolls of this district.

(Prepared in the office of the Collector of Saran district and sent under his no. XX/59-GII—1810-A, dated the 27th April 1959. The Collector informed that the approximate areas according to Regulation Settlement records come to 1,110.44 acres only and that only four tauzies have been transferred from Saran to other districts and none from other districts to Saran during the last 20 years--P.C.R.C.)

Appendix

TABLE I.*

Population According to Languages.

Mother-tongue.

Languages.	Total Speakers.		
	Persons.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4
Indo-Aryan languages—			
Hindi	31,51,835	14,99,342	16,52,493
Bengali	3,008	1,748	1,260
Punjabi	204	110	94
Nepali	61	32	29
Marwari	4	..	4
Gujrati	2	..	2
Oriya	1	1	..
Other Indo-Aryan languages	1	1	..
Dravidian languages—			
Tamil	4	..	4
Telgu	1	..	1
European language—			
English	23	19	4

Bilingualism.

Mother-tongue.	Total speakers.	Total persons returned as speaking a language subsidiary to that shown in column 1.	Subsidiary languages.	
1	2	3	4	
Hindi	31,51,835	396	Bengali ..	380
			Nepali ..	7
			Marwari ..	4
			Gujrati ..	3
			Marathi ..	1
			Oriya ..	1
Bengali	3,008	181	Hindi ..	181
Punjabi	204	47	Do. ..	47
Nepali	61	45	Do. ..	45
English	23	7	Do. ..	7
Marwari	4	4	Do. ..	4
Gujrati	2	2	Do. ..	2
Oriya	1	1	Do. ..	1

* District Census Hand-book, Saran 1951.

TABLE

LIVELIHOOD CLASSES BY EDUCA-

Educational Standard.	Total.			Agricultural — I Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependants.		II Cultivators of land wholly or mainly un owned and their dependants.		III Cultivating labourers and their dependants.	
	Persons.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DISTRICT.									
Literate ..	3,40,880	2,99,285	41,595	2,27,744	27,394	7,755	1,825	16,759	2,576
Middle School ..	28,693	26,345	2,348	19,667	1,597	441	70	1,466	145
Matriculate ..	8,048	7,827	221	4,495	98	143	6	192	17
Intermediate ..	1,284	1,261	23	672	14	20	..	18	.
DEGREES OR DIPLOMA.									
Graduate ..	934	918	16	478	9	13	..	25	..
Post-Graduate ..	171	167	4	108	2	1	.	.	..
Teaching ..	897	857	40	443	20	..	..	..	..
Engineering ..	25	24	1	16	..	..	..	.	.
Commerce ..	178	178	..	78	..	..	..	..	..
Agriculture ..	6	6	..	2	..	..	.	..	..
Veterinary ..	4	4	..	4	..	..	..	..	..
Legal ..	312	311	1	32	..	..	.	..	..
Medical ..	342	312	30	155	2	.	..	..	.
Others ..	2,649	2,483	166	1,848	39	38	1	32	2
Total ..	3,84,423	3,39,978	44,445	2,55,742	29,175	8,411	1,902	18,492	2,740

*District Census

II.*

TIONAL STANDARDS.

CLASSES.		NON-AGRICULTURAL CLASSES.							
		Persons (including dependants) who derive their principal means of livelihood from—							
IV Non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent receivers and their dependants.		V Production (other than cultivation).		VI Commerce.		VII Transport.		VIII Other services and miscellaneous sources.	
Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1,777	956	8,704	1,167	17,502	2,298	1,818	215	17,226	5,164
467	37	869	61	1,009	193	173	13	2,258	232
254	11	253	8	396	21	274	1	1,820	59
66	1	46	1	94	..	21	..	324	7
49	..	28	..	36	..	12	..	277	7
9	..	7	..	12	..	..	..	30	2
1	..	.	..	56	..	..	..	357	20
..	..	.	..	..	..	1	..	7	1
10	..	10	..	3	..	4	..	73	..
..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
.	..	.	..	..		..	..	..	..
11	..	..	..	.	.	..	.	268	1
7	..	2	..	27	..	..	..	121	28
13	.	47	..	28	..	4	..	473	124
2,664	1,005	9,367	1,237	19,163	2,512	2,307	229	23,232	5,645

TABLE III.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Cattle).

District and Subdivision.		Males over three years.			
		Breeding bulls, i. e., entire males over three years kept or used for breeding only	Working bullocks, i. e., bullocks and uncastrated males over three years kept for work only	Bulls and bullocks over three years not in use for breeding or work.	Total males over three years.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Saran ..	Total ..	1,414	3,33,899	2,940	3,38,253
	Rural ..	1,396	3,31,656	2,832	3,35,884
	Urban ..	18	2,243	108	2,369
(i) Chapra Sadar ..	Total ..	993	1,13,862	732	1,15,587
	Rural ..	991	1,12,399	709	1,14,099
	Urban ..	2	1,463	23	1,488
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	219	1,12,692	976	1,13,887
	Rural ..	211	1,12,529	898	1,13,638
	Urban ..	8	163	78	249
(iii) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	202	1,07,345	1,282	1,08,779
	Rural ..	194	1,06,728	1,225	1,08,147
	Urban ..	8	617	7	632

*Report on the Livestock Census of Bihar, 1956.

TABLE III— *contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Cattle)—*contd.*

District and Subdivision.		Females over three years. Breeding cows, i.e., cows over three years kept for breeding or milk production. In milk.	Dry.	Not calved.	Total.	Cows over three years used for work only.	Cows over three years not in use for work or breeding purposes.	Total females over three years.
1		7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Saran ..	Total ..	91,374	54,570	21,109	1,67,053	1,361	1,875	1,70,289
	Rural ..	89,596	53,667	20 904	1,64,167	1,278	1,846	1,67,290
	Urban ..	1,778	903	205	2,886	83	29	2,998
(i) Chapra Sadar.	Total ..	30,700	24,259	4,246	59,205	517	373	60,095
	Rural ..	29,467	23,490	4,129	57,086	511	367	57,964
	Urban ..	1,233	769	117	2,119	6	6	2,131
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	32,388	14,218	8,269	54,875	669	831	56,375
	Rural .	32,079	14,197	8,216	54,492	592	812	55,896
	Urban ..	309	21	53	383	77	19	479
(iii) Gopalganj	Total ..	28,286	16,093	8,594	52,973	175	671	53,819
	Rural ..	28,050	15,980	8,559	52,589	175	667	53,431
	Urban ..	236	113	35	384	..	4	388

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Cattle)—*contd.*

District and Subdivision.		Young Stock.					
		Under one year.			One to three years		
		Male.	Female.	Total.	Male	Female.	Total
1		14	15	16	17	18	19
Saran ..	Total ..	48,079	42,295	90,374	35,650	33,030	68,680
	Rural .	47,284	41,371	88,655	35,198	32,545	67,743
	Urban ..	795	924	1,719	452	485	937
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	17,330	15,126	32,456	10,270	14,122	24,392
	Rural ..	16,827	14,429	31,256	9,980	13,745	23,725
	Urban .	503	697	1,200	290	377	667
(ii) Siwan ..	Total .	16,558	14,280	30,838	11,442	9,049	20,491
	Rural	16,403	14,195	30,600	11,386	9,021	20,407
	Urban ..	153	85	238	56	28	84
(iii) Gopalganj	Total .	14,191	12,889	27,080	13,038	9,850	22,797
	Rural ..	14,052	12,747	26,790	13,932	9,779	23,611
	Urban ..	139	142	281	106	80	186

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population 1956 (Cattle)—*concld.*

District and Subdivision.		YOUNG STOCK—*concld.* Total three years and under. Male.	Female.	Total.	Total Cattle Male.	Female.	Total.
1		20	21	22	23	24	25
Saran ..	Total .	83,729	75,325	1,59,054	1,21,082	2,45,614	6,67,598
	Rural ..	82,482	73,916	1,56,398	4,18,266	2,41,207	6,59,573
	Urban ..	1,247	1,409	2,656	3,616	4,407	8,023
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total	27,600	29,248	50,848	1,43,187	89,343	2,32,530
	Rural .	26,807	28,174	54,981	1,40,906	86,138	2,27,044
	Urban ..	793	1,074	1,867	2,281	3,205	5,486
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	28,000	23,329	51,329	1,41,887	79,704	2,21,591
	Rural ..	27,791	23,216	51,007	1,41,429	79,112	2,20,541
	Urban ..	209	113	322	458	592	1,050
(iii) Gopalganj .	Total ..	28,129	22,748	50,877	1,36,908	76,567	2,13,475
	Rural ..	27,884	22,526	50,410	1,36,031	75,957	2,11,988
	Urban ..	245	222	467	877	610	1,487

TABLE III—*contd*

Live-stock Population, 1956 (Buffaloes).

District and Subdivision.		Males over three years.				Females over three years.			
						Breeding cows. i.e. cows over three years kept for breeding or milk production.			
		Breeding bulls.	Working bullocks.	Bulls and bullocks not in use for breeding or work.	Total males over three years.	In milk.	Dry.	Not calved.	Total.
1		26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
Saran ..	Total ..	1,270	487	357	2,114	75,353	38,731	14,407	1,28,491
	Rural ..	1,266	473	357	2,096	74,700	38,372	14 308	1,27,380
	Urban	4	14	..	18	653	359	99	1,111
(i) Chapra Sadar.	Total	965	273	160	1,398	30,481	22,020	4,692	57,193
	Rural ..	962	261	160	1,383	29,970	21,696	4,609	56,275
	Urban	3	12	..	15	511	324	83	918
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	100	176	111	387	25,799	9,820	4,959	40,578
	Rural ..	99	174	111	384	25,751	9,818	4,959	40,528
	Urban	1	2	..	3	48	2	..	50
(iii) Gopalganj	Total ..	205	38	66	329	19,073	6,891	4,756	30,720
	Rural ..	205	38	66	329	18,979	6 858	4,740	30,577
	Urban	..	..	..	..	94	33	16	148

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956—(Buffaloes)—*contd.*

District and Subdivision.		Females over three years—*concld.* Cows over three years used for work only.	Cows over three years not in use for work or breeding purpose.	Total females over three years.	Young Stock. Under one year. Male.	Female.	Total.
1		34	35	36	37	38	39
Saran ..	Total ..	1,833	1,170	1,31,494	10,371	30,861	50,232
	Rural ..	1,825	1,166	1,30,371	19,251	30,557	49,808
	Urban ..	8	4	1,123	120	304	424
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	923	400	58,516	6,983	12,748	19,731
	Rural ..	922	399	57,596	6,907	12,510	19,417
	Urban ..	1	1	920	76	238	314
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	789	578	41,945	6,096	10,023	16,119
	Rural ..	782	578	41,888	6,094	10,007	16,101
	Urban ..	7	..	57	2	16	18
(iii) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	121	192	31,033	6,292	8,090	14,382
	Rural ..	121	189	30,887	6,250	8,040	14,290
	Urban ..	..	3	146	42	50	92

TABLE III—*contd*.

Livestock Population, 1956—(Buffaloes)—*contd*.

District and Subdivision.		Young Stock—*contd*					
		One to three years.			Total three years and under.		
		Male	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1		40	41	42	43	44	45
Saran ..	Total ..	6,842	22,118	28,960	26,213	52 979	79,192
	Rural ..	6,803	21,901	28,704	26,054	52,458	78,512
	Urban ..	39	217	256	159	521	680
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	2,312	9,482	11,794	9,295	22,230	31,525
	Rural ..	2 283	9,287	11,570	9,190	21,797	30 987
	Urban ..	29	195	224	105	433	538
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	2,090	6,755	8,845	8,186	16,778	24,964
	Rural ..	2,086	6,752	8,838	8 180	16 759	24,939
	Urban ..	4	3	7	6	19	25
(iii) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	2,440	5,881	8,321	8,732	13,971	22,703
	Rural ..	2,434 ..	5,862	8,296	8,684	13,902	22,586
	Urban ..	6	19	25	48	69	117

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956—(Buffaloes)—*concld.*

District and Subdivision.		Total Buffaloes.			Total Bovine.		
		Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1		46	47	48	49	50	51
Saran ..	Total ..	28,327	1,84,743	2,12,800	4,50,309	4,30,087	8,80,396
	Rural ..	28,150	1,82,829	2,10,979	4,46,516	24,036	8,70,552
	Urban ..	177	1,644	1,821	3,793	6,051	9,844
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	10,693	80,746	91,439	1,53,880	1,70,089	3,23,969
	Rural ..	10,573	79,393	89,966	1,51,479	1,65,531	3,17,010
	Urban ..	120	1 353	1,473	2,401	4,558	6,959
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	8,573	58,723	67,296	1,50,460	1,38,427	2,88,887
	Rural ..	8,564	58,647	67,211	1,49,993	1,37,759	2,87,752
	Urban ..	9	76	85	467	668	1,135
(iii) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	9,061	45,004	54,065	1,45,969	1,21,571	2,67,540
	Rural ..	9,013	44,789	53,802	1,45,044	1,20,746	2,65,790
	Urban ..	48	215	263	925	825	1,750

TABLE III—*contd*.

Livestock Population, 1956 (Sheep).

District and Subdivision.		Up to one year.	Over one year.			Total Sheep.
			Male.	Female.	Total.	
1		52	53	54	55	56
Saran ..	Total ..	4,528	7,563	20 894	28,457	32,985
	Rural ..	4,331	7,286	20,140	27,426	31,757
	Urban ..	197	277	754	1,031	1,228
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	1,743	2,368	7,029	9 397	11,140
	Rural ..	1,549	2,094	6,282	8,376	9,925
	Urban ..	194	274	747	1,021	125
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	1,394	3,701	7,651	11,352	12,746
	Rural ..	1,394	3,701	7,651	11,352	12,746
	Urban ..	—	—	—	—	..
(*iii*) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	1,391	1,494	6,214	7,708	9,009
	Rural ..	1,388	1,491	6,207	7,698	9,086
	Urban ..	3	3	7	10	13

TABLE III—*contd*.

Livestock Population, 1956 (Goats).

District and Subdivision.		Up to one year.	Over one year.			Total Goats.
			Male.	Female.	Total.	
1		57	58	59	60	61
Saran ..	Total ..	71,853	1,06,791	2,28,847	3,35,638	4,07,491
	Rural ..	70,887	1,05,196	2,25,247	3,30,443	4,01,330
	Urban ..	966	1,595	3,600	5,195	6,161
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	25,861	30,845	89,133	1,19,978	1,45,839
	Rural ..	25,178	29,916	86,607	1,16,523	1,41,701
	Urban ..	683	929	2,526	3,455	4,138
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	16,246	36,073	68,004	1,04,077	1,20,323
	Rural ..	16,212	35,813	67,638	1,03,451	1,19,663
	Urban ..	34	260	366	626	660
(*iii*) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	29,746	39,873	71,710	1,11,583	1,41,329
	Rural ..	29,497	39,467	71,002	1,10,469	1,39,966
	Urban ..	249	406	708	1,114	1,363

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Horses and Ponies).

District and Subdivision.		Horses over three years	Mares over three years	Up to one year.		
				Male.	Female.	Total
1		62	63	64	65	66
Saran ..	Total ..	1,948	932	373	191	564
	Rural ..	1,877	870	371	189	560
	Urban ..	71	62	2	2	4
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	568	552	186	116	302
	Rural ..	806	493	186	116	302
	Urban ..	52	59	..	..	..
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	420	172	108	38	146
	Rural ..	411	170	107	36	113
	Urban ..	9	2	1	2	3
(*iii*) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	870	208	79	37	116
	Rural ..	860	207	78	37	115
	Urban ..	10	1	1	..	1

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Horses and Ponies)—*contd.*

District and Subdivision.		One to three years.			Total three years and under.			Total horses and ponies.		
		Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
1		67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Saran ..	Total .	976	743	1,719	1,349	934	2,283	3,297	1,866	5,163
	Rural ..	946	730	1,676	1,317	919	2,236	3,194	1,789	4,983
	Urban ..	30	13	43	32	15	47	103	77	180
(i) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	558	509	1,067	744	625	1,369	1,402	1,177	2,579
	Rural ..	536	501	1,037	722	617	1,339	1,328	1,110	2,438
	Urban ..	22	8	30	22	8	30	74	67	141
(ii) Siwan ..	Total ..	175	139	314	283	177	460	703	349	1,052
	Rural ..	175	137	312	282	173	455	693	343	1,036
	Urban ..	..	2	2	1	4	5	10	6	16
(iii) Gopalganj	Total ..	243	95	338	322	132	454	1,192	340	1,532
	Rural ..	235	92	327	313	129	442	1,173	336	1,509
	Urban ..	8	3	11	9	3	12	19	4	23

TABLE III—*contd.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Horses and Ponies)—*concld.*

District and Subdivision.		Mules.	Donkey. Male.	Donkey. Female.	Donkey. Total.	Camels.	Pigs.	Total livestock.
1		76	77	78	79	80	81	82
Saran ..	Total ..	270	6,348	5,706	12,054	107	12,299	13,50,765
	Rural ..	268	6,148	5,614	11,762	107	12,004	13,32,763
	Urban ..	2	200	92	292	..	295	18,002
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	38	2,252	2,053	4,305	20	4,786	4,92,676
	Rural ..	37	2,093	1,990	4,083	20	4,639	4,79,852
	Urban ..	1	159	63	222	..	147	12,825
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	200	2,407	2,166	4,573	87	3,467	4,31,335
	Rural ..	199	2,385	2,150	4,535	87	3,286	4,29,404
	Urban ..	1	22	16	38	..	81	1,931
(*iii*) Gopalganj	Total ..	32	1,689	1,487	3,176	..	4,046	4,26,754
	Rural ..	32	1,670	1,474	3,144	..	3,979	4,23,506
	Urban ..	..	19	13	32	..	67	3,248

TABLE III—*concld.*

Livestock Population, 1956 (Poultry).

District and Subdivision.		Fowls				Ducks.				Others.	Total Poultry.
		Hens.	Cocks.	Chikens.	Total.	Ducks.	Dra-kes.	Duck-lings.	Total.		
1		83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92
Saran ..	Total	30,881	19,611	29,745	80,237	837	573	597	2,007	10,754	92,998
	Rural	29,381	18,185	28,553	67,119	764	531	541	1,836	10,275	88,230
	Urban	1,500	1,426	1,192	4,118	73	42	56	171	479	4,768
(i) Chapra Sadar.	Total	9,184	6,446	8,703	24,333	270	197	119	586	5,249	30,168
	Rural	8,477	5,451	7,812	21,740	256	188	116	560	4,802	27,102
	Urban	707	995	891	2,593	14	9	3	26	447	3,066
(ii) Siwan	Total	14,168	8,527	13,879	36,574	461	301	448	1,213	2,459	40,246
	Rural	13,531	8,205	13,709	35,445	408	277	395	1,080	2,459	38,984
	Urban	637	322	170	1,129	53	27	53	133	..	1,262
(iii) Gopal-ganj.	Total	7,529	4,638	7,163	19,330	106	72	30	208	3,046	22,584
	Rural	7,373	4,529	7,032	18,934	100	66	30	196	3,014	22,144
	Urban	156	109	131	393	6	6	..	12	32	440

TABLE IV.

Agricultural Machinery and Implements.

District and Subdivision.		Ploughs. Wooden.	Ploughs. Iron.	Carts.	Sugarcane Crushers. Worked by powers.	Sugarcane Crushers. Worked by bullocks.
1		2	3	4	5	6
Saran ..	Total ..	18,63,219	21,415	35,969	577	4,721
	Rural ..	18,62,289	21,267	35,645	576	4,721
	Urban ..	930	148	324	1	..
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	71,994	9,609	10,408	134	268
	Rural ..	71,346	9,604	10,197	134	268
	Urban ..	648	5	211	..	..
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	61,967	4,309	11,326	316	3,245
	Rural ..	61,931	4,301	11,306	315	3,245
	Urban ..	36	8	20	1	..
(*iii*) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	53,258	7,497	14,235	127	1,208
	Rural ..	53,012	7,362	14,142	127	1,208
	Urban ..	246	135	93	..	..

TABLE IV—*concld.*

Agricultural Machinery and Implements.

District and Subdivision.		Oil engines with pumps for irrigation purpose.	Electric pumps for irrigation purpose.	Tractors.		Ghanis.	
				Government.	Private.	Five seers and over.	Less than five seers.
1		7	8	9	10	11	12
Saran ..	Total ..	133	37	9	70	451	7,239
	Rural ..	132	35	9	65	443	7,189
	Urban ..	1	2	..	5	8	50
(*i*) Chapra Sadar	Total ..	44	11	2	19	221	1,957
	Rural ..	44	10	2	19	219	1,928
	Urban ..	..	1	..	..	2	29
(*ii*) Siwan ..	Total ..	57	12	2	17	103	2,332
	Rural ..	56	11	2	15	100	2,331
	Urban ..	1	1	..	2	3	1
(*iii*) Gopalganj ..	Total ..	32	14	5	34	127	2,950
	Rural ..	32	14	5	31	124	2,930
	Urban ..	..	..	..	3	3	20

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BSP (Revenue) 28—Lino—2,000—14-2-1960—KNS

Plates



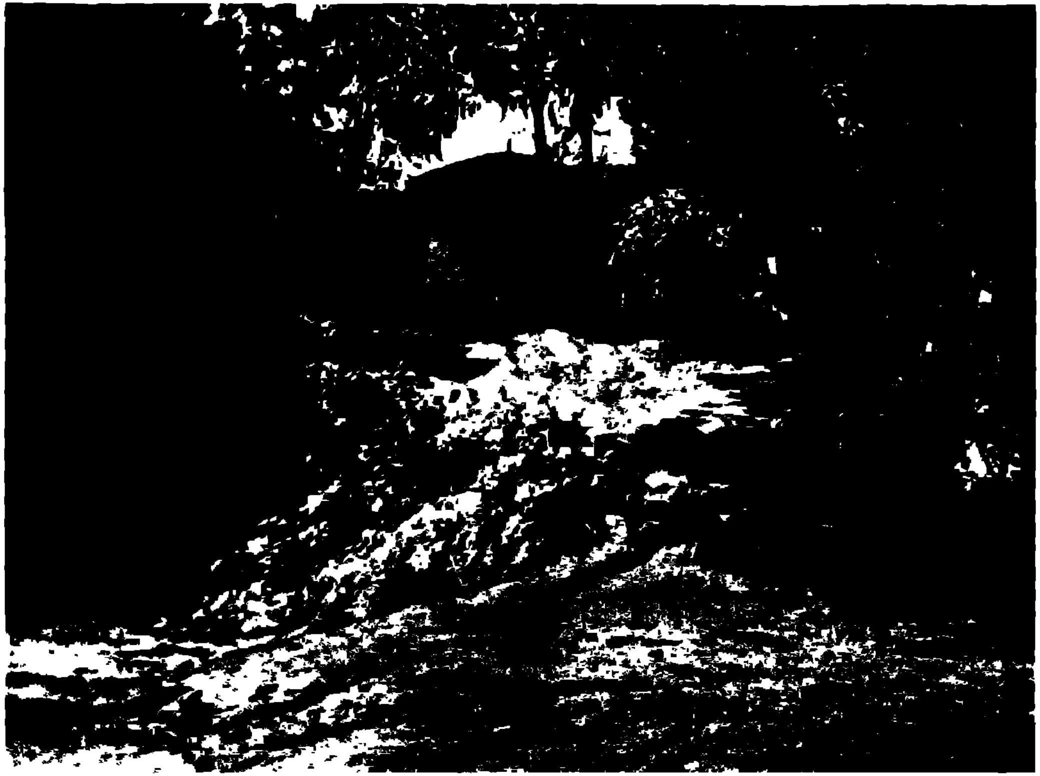
1 Dancing Ganeshan Now in Patna Museum.



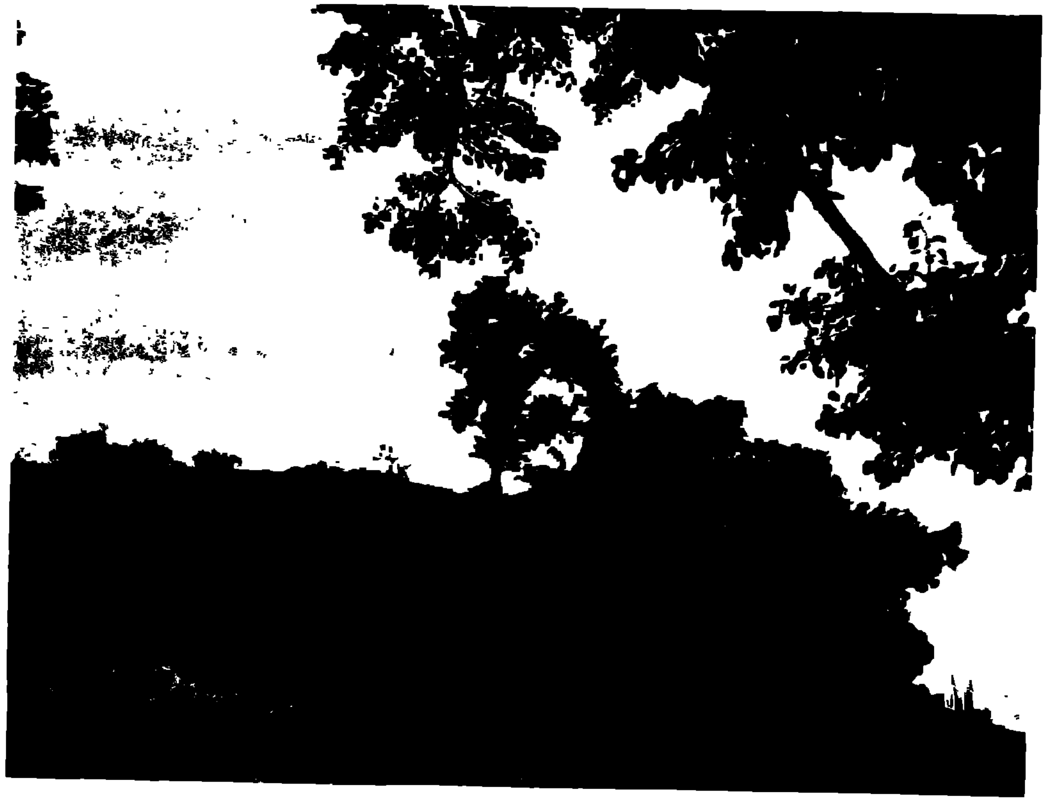
2 Image of Lord Vishnu found in village Ekasari, P.-S. Ekma- Now in Patna Museum.



3 Image of Lord Vishnu found in village Ekasari, P. S. Ekma Now in Patna Museum.



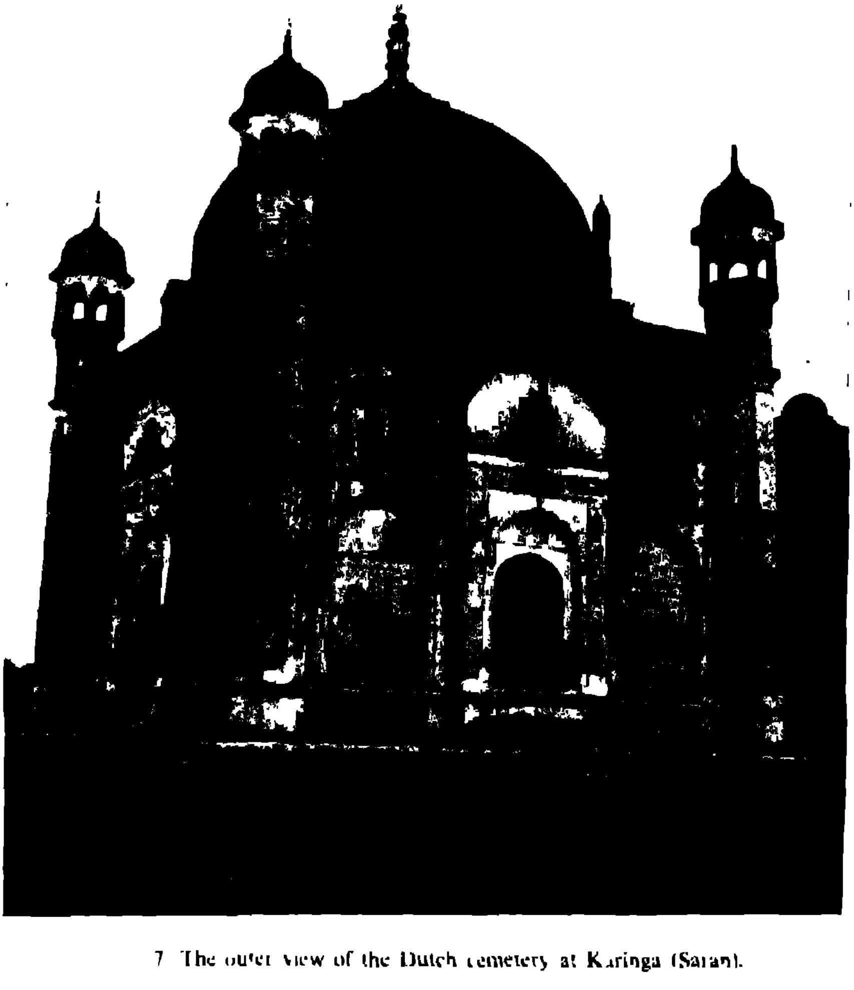
4 A view of the fort of Dhausi Ram at Silhauri (Saran



5. The eastern view of Chirand Garh.



6 A view of Manjhi Garh at Manjhi.



7 The outer view of the Dutch cemetery at Karinga (Saran).



8 A view of Hariharnath temple at Sonepur



9. A view of the Sonepur Bridge under construction.